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Progressive Literary Movement in Kashmir

Ghulam Nabi Khayal

(With more than 80 illustrations)

Khayalaat Publishers
Srinagar-Kashmir

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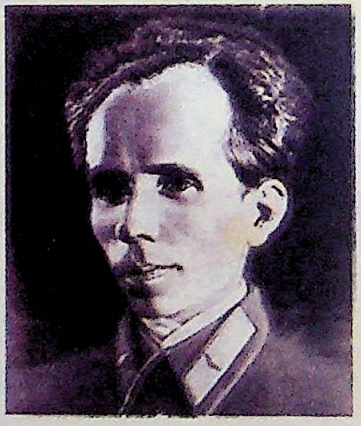
"**Man's** dearest possession is life. It is given to him but once, and he must live it so as to feel no torturing regrets for wasted years, never know the burning shame of a mean and petty past that, dying, he might say: all my life, all my strength were given to the finest cause in all the world- the fight for liberation of mankind."



- Nokolai Ostrovsky
Author of Great Russian novel:
How the Steel was Tempered

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to all those Comrades and torch bearers of progressive literary movement in Kashmir who brought about an epoch making change in our literary world but are no more with us today.

Ghulam Nabi Khayal

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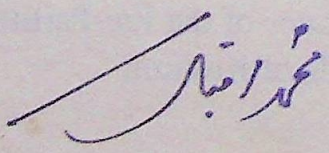
Freeman & Bondman

Allama Iqbal

The freeman's veins are firm as veins of granite;
The bondman's weak as tendrils of the vine,
And his heart too despairing and repining.
The free heart has life's tingling breath to fan it.
Quick pulse, clear vision, is the freeman's treasure;
The unfree, to kindness and affection dead,
Has no more wealth than tears of his own shedding
And those glib words he has in such good measure.
Bondman and free can never come to accord;
One is heaven's lackey, one their lord.



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PREFACE

Sahitya Akademi, (The National Academy of Letters,) New Delhi, recently launched a purposeful scheme known as Writers in Residence.

This project was aimed at enriching literatures of various Indian regional languages with having new and research-based publications prepared by the selected writers and research scholars of repute.

When the Akademi approached me in this regard and offered me a project, I felt too glad to accept the proposal and made a choice of mine that I compile a book on Progressive Literary Movement in Kashmir, the movement which proved a mile stone for our modern literature covering more than shalf-a- century.

In order to save the precious pages of this compilation from being burdened with the original text of the translated poems, only English renderings have been included at most of the places. Secondly, the book has been essentially written for the English knowing readers across the world. Hence, including the Kashmiri original text in the publication would be obviously of no use to them.

I am personally indebted to late Prof J L Kaul, Hameed Mumtaz (Muzaffarabad), Prof Trilokinath Raina and some more writers, whose English translations of Kashmiri poems I have extensively used in this compilation. Hasrat Gadda provided me with some data and pictures of some progressive writers of Kashmir. My thanks are due to him.

I am grateful to Sahitya Akademi for its active and timely assistance to facilitate me complete the book, which may be acclaimed as the first book of its kind on this unique subject.

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CHAPTER ONE
Birth and Evolution of Marxism

At the outset, I must say that this chapter which is based upon the birth and propagation of Marxism carries extensive quotes from Marx himself. He was the founder of the philosophy and no one else other than him has ever been interpreting the Marxism in a better way and in an appealing style or treatment of the theory.

The philosophy of Marxism was propounded by an economist philosopher of Jewish origin, Karl Marx, during nineteenth century when the overwhelming majority of people in Asia, Europe and Asia had been facing all sorts of miseries perpetrated against them by the Fascist and Imperialist forces in most parts of the western, Eastern and African world.

Marx himself has quite extensively delved deep into the basics of his dialectical materialism and as I believe, it is hardly in need of further elaboration by someone else. Therefore this

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chapter detailed by Marx in his own summery of this first ever progressive concept of life and highlighted by him does not demand any second hand addition to this very important subject. An overpowering racial discrimination, exploitation of poor nations, colonial expansionism occupying backward nations particularly in Asia and Africa, and imperialist designs of suppression of the downtrodden class of the society all over the world, resulted in emergence of a new people's politics coupled with the betterment of the economically hapless people and an end to forced occupation of freedom loving states.

This philosophy was introduced to the world by Karl Marx, who appeared on the scene as a saviour of tormented people and in the support of labourers, workers and farmers across the globe.

Karl Heinrich Marx was born on 5 May 1818 AD in Germany. He breathed his last in London on 14 March 1883 where he is buried. Before his death, he desired to be left alone for sometime and when his friends entered into his room two hours later, they found him sleeping in his armchair; forever.

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It my be called a coincidence that in 1846, when the British colonial rulers in India sold out the entire Kashmir State to Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh for a paltry amount of Rs 75 lakh, the same year Marx set up the first Communist International to fight out the hegemony of exploiters in the society. He spent his 65-year long life in uniting the labourers and workers of the world and his philosophy took its deep roots within no time. However, his great contribution has been his epoch making work *Das Kapital*, considered the unique and great work on philosophy and dialectical materialism till date.

In his *Armughaan-e-Hijjaz* by Allama Iqbal, there is a poem titled *Iblees ki majlis-e-shoora* wherein Marx has been eologised as:

Woh Kaleem-e-be tajjali, woh Maseeh-e-be saleeb

Neest paighambar walekin dar baghal daarad kitab

During the 19th and 20th century, the Marxism spread over the whole world and as much as one third of the world population accepted this philosophy disseminated for uplift of common man.

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Marx' close associates and like minded world class progressive thinkers, Friedrich Angeles, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin and Mao Tse Tung carried further the message of Marxism. The main slogan of Communist philosophy: "Workers of the world, Unite" fast became the *Magna Carta* of the common people particularly in the Western countries, Asia, and many other states in the world. Speaking about the basic fight of poor against the rich, Marx said in the *Communist Manifesto*, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle."

In 1934, in the Soviet Writers Congress, a debate was conducted on the subject of Socialist Realism and Modernism, in which the following resolution was adopted by the delegates of the Congress. This resolution was drafted on the basis of a report submitted by Maxim Gorky.

It said, " Having heard and discussed the report of Maxim Gorky on Soviet literature, the reports on the literatures of the Ukrainian S.S.R, the Russian S.S.R., the Georgian S.S.R, the Armenian S.S.R, the Azerbaijan S.S.R, the Tajik

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S.S.R., the Turkmenian S.S.R, the Uzbek S.S.R and the Tatar Autonomous S.S.R, and the co-report on children's literature, the First All Union Congress of Soviet Writers places on record that, as a result of the victorious building of socialism and the rout of the class enemies of the proletariat and toilers of the U.S.S.R, the Soviet literature of the peoples of the Soviet Union has grown into a mighty force for socialist culture and for the education of the toiling masses in the spirit of socialism. Under the leadership of the heroic Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with Comrade Stalin at its head, and thanks to the Party's daily help, the writers of all peoples of the U.S.S.R. have come to their first congress as a collective body, which, in its ideas, organisation and creative work, has rallied around the Party and the Soviet power into a single union of Soviet writers. The Congress approves the work of the Organisational Committee, which has realised the unification of Soviet writers into the Union of Soviet Writers and carried out the preparations for their first Congress. The Congress notes the outstanding part taken in this work by the great proletarian

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writer, Maxim Gorky. Taking into consideration the reports and the exchange of opinions at the Congress, the Congress instructs the guiding organs of the Union of Soviet Writers to lose no time in devising measures for aiding Soviet writers in their creative work, for helping young writers and strengthening the tie between the writers and the toiling masses, so that the whole activity of the Union of Soviet Writers may secure a further growth of creative work in all spheres of Soviet literature and the creation of works of high quality, infused with the spirit of socialism. The Congress of Writers expresses its profound solidarity with the revolutionary writers who are held prisoners by international reaction, who are defending the cause of the toiling masses, the cause of the progress of mankind, and promises to fight with all its might for their release. The Congress is firmly convinced that the future belongs to international revolutionary literature, for it is linked up with the struggle of the working class for the liberation of all mankind."

In fact, this historical resolution proved a booster for the entire world appealing the

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intellectuals to change their mindset and come forward for the betterment of a common man who had always been exploited by the western imperialists and forces of illegal occupation.

MARXISM

"Marxism as proposed by Karl Marx advances the following ideas.

The most important features of a *society* are its economic *classes* and their relations to each other in the modes of production of each historical epoch.

A class is defined by the *relations of its members to the means of production.*

Under *capitalism*, the capitalists own the *means of production*; the *proletariat* own only their capacity to work. Landlords rule the land, and the *peasants* are less significant than workers and are trapped in the *idiocy of rural life*. The proletariat definitely includes those who produce objects in factories with their hands, but Marxists dither about whether it includes people who work with their minds but are employees and live by their salaries.

History is the history of *class struggles* among the classes in society. New *progressive*

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classes arise that are related to new forms of production and struggle with the old. New forms of society arise appropriate to the new forms of production when the new classes win power. This doctrine is called *historical materialism*.

The *state* is the means whereby the *ruling class* forcibly maintains its rule over the other classes.

The *successive stages of history* include *primitive communism* characterised by equalitarian hunting and gathering, *barbarism* characterised by rule by chiefs, *slave society* with a slave class and agriculture, *feudalism*, *capitalism*, *socialism* and *communism*.

Most struggles in history are *class struggles*, even though the participants profess other goals. For example, Protestantism reflects the rising of the capitalist class.

New classes usually win power by *revolution*. Revolutions are violent, because the dying ruling class doesn't give up power without a desperate struggle.

The *capitalist class* wins power over the *feudal class* by a *bourgeois democratic revolution*. A bourgeois democratic revolution

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is a good thing in its day, because it gets rid of feudal personal relations and replaces them by a *cash nexus*.

Capitalism creates the *proletariat* who has nothing to sell but their labour by bankrupting the *artisan* classes and the *petty bourgeoisie* and driving them into the proletariat.

The *proletariat* wins power by a *proletarian revolution.* According to Marx and Lenin, this revolution must be violent, because the *bourgeoisie* won't give up power by electoral means.

Neither Russia nor China had undergone a *bourgeois-democratic* revolution when the communists seized power. The communists undertook to build socialism anyway, and some of their rival socialists used the missing *bourgeois-democratic revolution* to predict that communist power would end badly.

Around the end of the 19th century Edouard Bernstein argued that it was possible to win power peacefully by winning elections. This was *revisionism* and the orthodox Marxist have used *revisionism* as an epithet ever since. "Revisionism" came to have more general

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meanings than Bernstein's actual doctrine, because it could be applied to people who denied Bernstein's doctrine but who could be accused of not being revolutionary enough.

Under capitalism the progressive class is the *proletariat* which is destined to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism, which will eventually evolve into communism.

Historical materialism is the Marxist methodology for interpreting history. The idea is to interpret all relations between groups of people as class relations and to interpret all conflicts as reflections of class struggles. A specific sequence of historical stages is part of the doctrine. It is *primitive communism*, *barbarism*, *slavery*, *feudalism*, *capitalism socialism and communism*. Each stage of history has its own *ruling class* which uses *the state* to maintain its rule. Under feudalism the ruling class is the nobility, under capitalism it is the capitalists, and under socialism it is the proletariat. Primitive communism and communism are classless. In some countries *oriental despotism* happens as a stage distinct from feudalism.

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The main feature of *socialism* is *public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.*

Under capitalism, workers "tend" to be paid the bare amount required for them to support their families and reproduce. This is because of competition for jobs from the *reserve army of labour*, the unemployed.

The capitalist sells the product of the workers' labour at a price proportional to its *value*, which is the *socially necessary labour* required to produce it.

The difference between what the product sells for and what the workers are paid is *surplus value* and is *appropriated* by the capitalist.

Because the workers can't buy the full product of their labour and the capitalists don't consume all the surplus value.

The steady increase in labour saving machinery creates unemployment and drives down wages. This emphasises the tendency for there to be economic recessions. The other classes, *artisans* and *petty bourgeoisie*, small shopkeepers, go broke and are driven into the proletariat. Even the smaller capitalists go broke.

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In his *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, written in 1840, Angeles asserted that "The middle classes must increasingly disappear until the world is divided into millionaires and paupers. . . . This result must and will come, unless it is anticipated by a total transformation of social conditions, a fusion of opposed interests, an abolition of private property."

Then a *socialist revolution* occurs. Originally this was supposed to occur first in the most advanced capitalist countries, Germany, Britain and the United States. It wasn't supposed to occur first in a backward country like Russia, where a *bourgeois-democratic revolution* should have happened first.

In the first stages of *socialism* the *state* is a *dictatorship of the proletariat,* the *proletariat* rules the other classes by force.

The *socialist* slogan is "*From each according to his ability, to each according to his work.*" The *communist* slogan is "*From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.*"

Communism, which evolves peacefully from socialism, is a *classless society* under which the *state* will *wither away.*

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Marx wrote, "In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, have vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of the co-operative wealth flow more abundantly - only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe upon its banners: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!" *(K. Marx: Critique of the Gotha Programme)*

Capitalism normally is replaced by *socialism* as a consequence of a *proletarian revolution.*

Prior to the overthrow of capitalism the proletariat must develop its own *class consciousness*. Other classes have their own forms of class consciousness.

Class hatred is a good thing and *class collaboration* is a bad thing.

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Under capitalism, capitalist ideology penetrates other classes and must be struggled against by the proletariat.

Trade unions are good as training grounds for the class struggle, but it is capitalist ideology to suppose that they can make any permanent improvement in the condition of the proletariat. The belief that trade unions can make a permanent difference is a heresy called *economism* or *trade-unionism*, although the term may be due to Lenin.

The increasing exploitation of the working class leads to economic crises, because the working class cannot afford to buy the products of its labour. These crises get more intense with time.

Literature, art and other forms of culture tend to reflect the *class ideology* of the class to which the artist belongs. However, the ideology of other classes can also affect the artist.

The philosophy of Marxism calls itself *dialectical materialism.*

The materialism part is opposed to *idealism* and holds that the world is to be understood as matter in motion.

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The dialectical part includes the *transformation of quantity into quality*, the *dialectical process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis* and the *unity of opposites* alias *the contradictory tendencies of the thing.*

As far as I can see *tipping point* is a new name for *transformation of quantity into quality.*

There is also a philosophy of history called *historical materialism.* Its main feature is the interpretation of history in terms of *class struggle* and historical progression in terms of revolutions in which a new *ruling class* takes over from the old ruling class.

That is quite a lot, and there is quite a bit more.

There is neither the space nor the knowledge nor the reader the patience to go into the different doctrines of European social democratic parties. Some adhered to almost all of the above analysis and some to very little of it. The *dictatorship of the proletariat* was the sticking point for many. American socialism was mainly an imitation of European except that Daniel De Leon had a variant Marxist socialist

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doctrine and took over the Socialist Labour Party which still exists.

In 1919, after the communists seized power in Russia, the Communist International (COM intern) was formed and attempted to get socialist parties all over the world to affiliate with it. This resulted in splits within most socialist parties. In the U.S., the Socialist Party split, the Communist Party being the part that joined the COM intern. The Socialist Party was never as strong in the U.S. as were the corresponding parties in Europe, but it did get about a million votes in 1916. Neither the Communist Party nor the Socialist Party ever came close again. Stalin made the COM intern dissolve in 1943. I suppose he preferred direct control over communist parties, rather than through a nominally independent international organisation.

LENINISM

Lenin added the following, and of course not all people who call themselves Marxists accept his additions. Just about all who called themselves communists after 1919 did.

Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism.

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The working class in the *mother countries* is bribed to keep it passive by exploiting the labour of the *colonies*. This explains why the working class became more prosperous in the late 19th and early 20th centuries instead of becoming more miserable as a direct reading of Marxist theory might suggest.

The rivalry of the colonial countries becomes more and more intense leading to *imperialist wars*. World War I was the prize example (and maybe the only example) of this. A major attraction of communism after World War I was the fact that the Russian communists had opposed the Tsarist war effort. The American Socialist Party did too, but got much less political benefit from it. The notion of imperialist war was pressed into service after the Hitler-Stalin pact of August 1939 to characterise resistance to Hitler in the West after Hitler attacked Poland on September 1, 1939. The idea that World War II was an imperialist war was reversed when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. The working class needs to be led by a *vanguard party*, the *Communist*

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Party which in turn is led by *professional revolutionaries.*

The Party itself is ruled by *democratic centralism.* The doctrine was that decisions would be made democratically and then enforced by a central mechanism that didn't allow further dissent. In fact the power struggles almost always led to one man dictatorship, mostly dominated from Moscow. Escaping Moscow control was always a major crisis in a communist party, successful in Yugoslavia and China, unsuccessful in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the United States.

The leadership of the working class by the vanguard party continues into the period of socialism.

The state can't wither away soon; in fact the *socialist state* needs to be strengthened because of all its internal and external enemies.

The exploiters need to be *liquidated as a class.* This ambiguous phrase sometimes just meant taking their property and exiling them, but often

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enough it meant killing them and sometimes their families.

National conflicts are to be solved by a federation organised in a way that is *national in form and socialist in content*. In practice, this turned out to be a variant of Russian imperialism, but a variant in which the Russian people turned out to have very little stake.

The Soviet Union is the *Workers' Fatherland*, and workers all over the world owe it loyalty and must accept the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union led by Stalin.

Any movement that calls itself socialist but does not accept the leadership of the Soviet Union and Comrade Stalin is *objectively* anti-socialist and even *objectively* fascist. Such movements and their adherents may be treated as *class enemies*.

Lenin persistently demonstrated his solidarity and symptahy with the aggressed upon millions of Indian masses who had been facing dreaded colonial rule of the British imperialism.

In his message to the Indian Revolutionary Association run in *Pravda* in its issue of 20 May

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1920, he addressed the Indian people in these spirited words, " I am too glad to hear that suppressed and oppressed nations have risen to the occasion against the plunder of their labour by the foreign capitalists. The principles of freedom and right of self determination which the republic of labourers had declared is now touching upon the minds of the Indian people. The workers of Russia are eagerly watching the awakening of the Indian labourer and farmer. We welcome the solid unity of Muslim and non-Muslim forces. We are sincerely desirous to know that this unity is turned into a strong bond and shall shelter the Indian workers. For, when the Indian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Iranian and Turkish Labourers extend their hands of friendship towards each other, only then the victory against exploiters is sure to be achieved. Long live free Asia."

MAOISM

Mao added that in a country like China, the revolution could proceed first in the countryside which would surround the cities.

Also he emphasised class struggle within socialism and its evolution towards communism

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to be played out in a series of *cultural revolutions*."

To explain to the reader the detailed background and significance of Marxist philosophy, there could be no one else except Marx himself who could make his observations most acceptable and research oriented. Therefore, the author of this book has taken pleasure to quote Marx extensively from his printed theory.

(Some quotes given above within inverted commas, have been reproduced also from website inputs)

To sum up with the onslaught made on Marxist philosophy, a veteran Communist thinker of Jammu and Kashmir, Krishen Dev Sethi says , "Khrushchev and other traitors of Marxism and Gorbachev, the great traitor surrendered the flag of Marxism and threw it into the lap of imperialism in 1991." Expressing his unflinching faith and belief in Marxism and its bright future, Sethi says further, "During its two hundred years of popularity, the present aggression on Marxism is the severest one. It is therefore the duty of true Marxists that they will not allow lowering of the Marxist flag, shall

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impart light form the Marxist philosophy and intensify their class struggle. The crisis-infested and dying imperialism shall be trampled under the feet of Marx principles. Thus they will make Allama Iqbal's comment come true which he described in this verse:

Gaya daur-e-sarmaya dari gaya
Tamasha dikha kar madari gaya
(The era of Capitalism has gone,
The juggler has packed up after his show of jugglery)

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CHAPTER TWO
India's War of Independence and Kashmiri Poetry

More than 150 years ago, when Indian war of independence began, Kashmir, at that time, was a separate and sovereign country and had no political relations with the rest of India. It was eleven years earlier in 1846, that Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh had entered into a sale deed of Kashmir with the British colonisers according to which, the entire state of Kashmir along with its fields, birds, live stock, rivers and streams, mountains and even trees were sold out to Gulab Singh only for Rs 75 lakh Nanak Shahi. This deed was signed on 16 March 1846 in Amritsar and is therefore known as *"Bainaamah Amritsar"* or "the Treaty of Amritsar." Here are some salient features of this disgraceful deed:

The British government transfers and makes over forever independent possession to

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Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the river Indus and the westward of the river Ravi including Chamba and excluding Lahul, being part of the territories ceded to the British government by the Lahore state according to the provisions of the Article IV of the Treaty of Lahore, signed on 9 March 1846.

In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing article Maharaja Gulab Singh will pay to the British government the sum of seventy-five lakh rupees out of which fifty lakh to be paid on ratification of this treaty and twenty-five lakh on or before the 1st October of the current year, A.C. 1846.

The British government will give its aid to Maharaja Gulab Singh in protecting his territories from external enemies.

Maharaja Gulab Singh will acknowledge the supremacy of the British government and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British government one horse, twelve shawl

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goats of approved breed (six male and six female) and three pairs of Cashmere shawls.

In the words of Kashmiri historian, Prem Nath Bazaz, "While making this transfer, the British authorities in India did not so much as to ascertain the views of the people of Kashmir on the subject. They did not consult even one of their leaders. It was altogether a sordid, shameful affair devoid of all sense of fairness, justice and equity. Two million of people in the Valley and Gilgit were sold like sheep and cattle to an alien adventurer and the whole transaction was made behind their back. The treaty consisting of ten articles makes no mention whatsoever of the rights, interests or the future of the people."

Mahatama Gandhi called this treaty "a document of sale", Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that it was a "paper of the slavery of Kashmir," a veteran Kashmiri freedom fighter, Sardar Budh Singh said "it is a sell- and- buy act between two dacoits," The top ranking Kashmiri intellectual and politician, Maulana Mohammad Sayed Masoodi described the deed as "a document of an auction of goods," and a

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renowned Urdu scholar of the sub continent, Maulana Ghulam Rasool Mehr commented "in 1846, The British sold out Kashmir in a way that during the early days of the American colonialism, even black slaves might not have been sold in this manner," and the Poet of the East, Allama Iqbal aptly said about this treaty:

Dehqaan-o-kishto-joay-o- khayabaan faroakhtand

Qaume faroakhtand- o- chi arzaan faroakhtand

(Their fields, their crops, their gardens,
Even the peasants in the Vale
They sold, they sold all of it, Alas
how cheap was the sale).

Being apart from each other in all respects, Kashmir and India had apparently no relationship, whatever, among them as far as the war of independence is concerned, but many scholars and students of this subject might not be aware of the heartening fact that after reaching the affects of this war into Murree and Hazara divisions in South of the erstwhile India, the Abbasi leader Sardar Sherbaz Khan decided to take on the British and sought support of

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influential tribal leaders in the area. Among those who extended their support to the Sherbaz Khan, was included one Sardar Resham Khan of Poonch state in Kashmir. This step however did not succeed and all the eight sons of Sherbaz Khan were killed and he was himself hanged. All other tribal leaders involved in the rebellion were also done to death by the British colonial occupation forces.

In 1857, the foundation was laid for the freedom of India, The goal of which the country achieved after 90 years, but those who sacrificed their lives for freedom, included men also belonging to Kashmir. The ruthless British rulers took all suppressive measures for; their 300,000-men strong army was in possession of huge quantities of superior weaponry and unlimited resources of crushing the revolt; whereas on the other side unarmed people fought out a mighty colonial power without any substantial material support at their disposal.

This is rather unfortunate that most power-hungry rulers of erstwhile Indian states and Maharajas sided with the British and set a disgraceful example of treachery and becoming

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traitors of their own motherland. The renowned Urdu poet, Mirza Ghalib described the situation of those frightful days in these words, "Before my eyes, streams of human blood are flowing." And he continues to add that how the victorious British army butchered one and all, whoever caught its eye. Every human being was slaughtered and properties of common people were looted with impunity." Three princes, sons of the Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar were executed at Khooni Darwazah in Delhi and their severed heads were offered to him at breakfast table as trophies. A few weeks later, Bahadur Shah was arrested and counseled to plead for mercy. Zafar responded with this verse of rejection and rebuttal:

Ghaaziyoon main boo rahey gi jab talak eemaan ki Takht-e-London tak chalegi tegh Hindustan ki

(If the glory of our self-respect remains undimmed, The sword of our power will pierce and shake the Crown of London)

After a few weeks, in October 1858, Bahadur Shah was arrested, his eyes gouged out and he was exiled to Yengon (Rangoon) where he

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breathed his last on 7 November 1862 in a state of utmost mental agony and misery. Despite this brutality exercised against Shah and his dear ones, Bahadur Shah Zafar preferred to die for his motherland and offered his life in the name of freedom for an enslaved India.

This was the patriotic Mughal emperor for whose empire lakhs of Hindus laid down their lives and in return, Zafar banned cow slaughter respecting religious sentiments of the Hindu community. Zafar was a mystic poet and a God-fearing person. "He wrote verses in which he described his visits to a Hindu temple, with *Qashqa* (vermillion mark) on the forehead and *zunnaar* (sacred thread) around his neck."

He was proud of his being a secular king of all Indians and was a staunch adversary of British colonisers.

In Kashmir, writings of those poets, writers and historians who might have touched upon the subject of the India's first war of independence, could not be preserved mainly due to the bitter fact that, for a long period of time, Kashmir has been under constant occupation of foreign rulers who promoted

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their own cultures instead of developing local language, art, culture and the rich heritage of Kashmir Valley. They always considered the beautiful Kashmir Valley as a haven of their luxury and merry making. But in that choking atmosphere also, the writers and intellectuals of Kashmir did not allow the torch of their conscience and creative genius to extinguish.

Different rulers and Maharajas of Kashmir did not leave any stone unturned to mete out inhuman treatment to their subjects repeatedly but the people of Kashmir firmly stuck to the conviction of a secular society and patriotism without failing at any crucial stage. These human values are reflected in their writings in one way or the other. This immortal depiction of humanism and communal brotherhood is still seen clearly in the poetry of Kashmir today.

Kashmiri poetry, available with us from the early days of 14th century AD, is based on Kashmir Shaivism and Reshism and *tasawwuf*. Two most important propagators of this humanitarian philosophy, Lalleshwari or Lalla Arifa, and Sheikhul Alam Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani, preached that God was within

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everyone's own self and not to be found in idols of temples or elsewhere. They spread the message of keeping the bodily desires under check and restraint from lavish style of living and worldly luxuries. About a human being, they believed that he would take along with him only his good or bad deeds and nothing else. This is the reason that teachings of Lalla and Sheikh are evergreen even today

Lalla Arifa Says:

I pull my boat,
With an untwisted thread,
How can I sail across deep waters?
I'm like water absorbed
In unbaked clay pots
My soul aspires
I reach my home.
The idol and the temple are but stone,
Stone they are and nothing else.
Wise Pandit, whom dost thou worship?
Unite thy mind and breathe in Him alone

And Sheikhul Alam disseminated this kind of philosophy of a pious human life:

No wonder, born of the same father and mother We bear no ill will to each other.

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Should our love bind us all alike? Hindu and Musalman,
Then only God is pleased with us Don't peel your skin
It will not helpTo cleanse your heart
You won't achieve Him
Through tricks and trap,
Wearing saintly robes and rosaries.
You'll achieve Him,
Thru' the only course of being a mortal
Compliant soul, devoted to Him
And Him alone;
Or you will pity yourself,
Both here and in the Hereafter.

During the century-long peaceful freedom struggle in India, Kashmir was forced to live under the darkness of slavery. First, a sovereign Kashmir was brought under subjugation by the Mughals with their occupying this country. Afterwards, the cruel Pathans and Sikhs proved the worst enemies of Kashmiris and then people of Kashmir were forced to live under the autocratic rule of Dogras for one full century till 1947.

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It is rather heartening to recall that along with the fight for freedom from the British India launched under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, Kashmir also was influenced by this peaceful fight and it was in the wake of Quit India that in May 1946, people of Kashmir, under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, launched a similar and popular Quit Kashmir movement which rallied around the slogan of "Do away with Treaty of Amritsar," and "Quit Kashmir."

The Quit Kashmir movement got massive support in a few days and Abdullah was put behind the bars by Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru rushed to Kashmir to present himself as the defense counsel for the detained Abdullah but he was stopped by the Maharaja and sent from the western borders of the State back to Delhi.

In 1947, when the tribal raiders from the Frontier region of Pakistan invaded Kashmir, the people of the Valley witnessed a tremendous shift in the writings of Kashmiri writers which was based on the ideas of patriotism, love for motherland and to safeguard the honour and

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dignity of the Kashmiri nation. In order to shelve this act of aggression, the Indian government offered its military assistance to the Maharaja And a local historian and writer, Prem Nath Pardesi eologised the vigour of Kashmiris' fighting back in this composition:

We will march ahead step by step,
And fight on the battle front.
We'll fight against plunderers and aggressors,
We'll fight back oppressors and suppressors
Now, there's no question of any special creed
This is not the fight of one, two or five or seven,
This is the question of life and death of a nation,
We'll march ahead and fight back the aggressor.

And noted progressive Urdu poet from Hyderabad, Makhdoom Mohiuddin, who was a frequent visitor to Kashmir during that turmoil, extended his unconditional support to the Kashmiri people, saying:

This is the war of independence,
Started under the banner of freedom,

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Jammu & Kashmir belongs to us,
In south and north and in east and west,
We Ladakhis, we Kashmiris,
We fighters from Jammu,
We, the red soldiers, with iron fist and determination,
This war of independence
We are fighting for our motherland.

In the words of Sayeda Jafar, "this poem of Makhdoom is the memorial of a particular scenario. It is full of fervour which makes one's mind boil with thought and action.

This poem is reminiscent of famous French song lama Rese and it has the fury and ebullition of *International*, the song of the international labourers' movement. During the war of freedom in India, Makhdoom not only represented the feelings of his country, but he also spoke on behalf of all those freedom fighters of enslaved countries who desired to be free from the clutches of despotism

It was during those tumultuous days that *Mufakkir-e-Kashmir,* Maulana Mohammad Sayed Masoodi wrote the song of the flag of Kashmir. The flag also depicted its being

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influenced by the Red movement. It was all red-coloured with a white plough embellishing it in the centre.

Maulana composed the song of the flag in these mind blowing verses:

"Lehra Aiy Kashmir ke Jhandey"
Let this flag of Kashmir be unfurled,
The flag of our people, of young and old alike,
Of the strong and the non-violent,
And of our poor peasants
Whoever ploughs the land.
Let this flag be always flying
Over our valleys and our lakes;
Till the day of judgment
Let it raise its proud head
May this flag forever fly
Over the meadows and the mountain tops
Over pastures green and rushing streams
And limitless expanse of land;
May it ever fly over the houses of the poor
And adorn mansions of the rich.
Let this flag be ever flying
In the four corners of this land;
Till the day of judgment

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Let this our symbol be.
This red flag of Kashmir
This beloved flag of ours
And of our peasants, too;
Which brings succour to the poor
And the down-trodden
And gladdens every heart
May it fly forever
In every nook and corner,
Till the day of judgment,
May I behold thee!

A little earlier, the Kashmiri revolutionary poet, Abdul Ahad Azad, had owned the entire India as his own homeland, and had even differed with some of the Indian politicians for their adopting a wrong path. He wrote a poem on Subhash Chandra Bose wherein he expressed his dissent with Bose for latter's seeking help from Japan to liberate India. Azad was of this firm opinion that India's freedom should be brought about by the Indian people themselves and no one else from outside. He said:

The whirlpool makes circles around it
And overcomes the tornado,

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The respect of a house owner commands in his home,

Is not available to him outside

Azad's senior contemporary, Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor, had already introduced a strong element of modernism in Kashmiri poetry. He was the first among all modern poets who sang of abounding beauties of Kashmir, resentment against slavery and praising man's freedom. He was not however happy about the fruits of freedom in 1947 which according to him, "reached only the chosen ones and not the common man." It is said that Rabindranath Tagore after listening to the English translation of Mahjoor's some poetic pieces, said, "Had Mahjoor been a Bengali knowing, I would have believed that he has adopted my ideas."

The renowned Indian intellectual and film artist, late Balraj Sahni, who was the first non-Kashmiri writer to visit Kashmir for meeting Mahjoor narrates an interesting episode illustrating the dismal picture of indifference and ignorance of the Kashmiri people towards their own literary luminaries. One day, writes Sahni, when he was on a joy ride in a *shikara*

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from Dal Lake to other areas of the city through streams and water ways, he heard the boatman singing a song in a very pleasant voice. Prof. Devindra Sathyarthi, the most enthusiastic collector of the Indian folklore, was also with Sahni.

When they reached their destination, Sahni asked one of the persons in the boat as to whose song the boatman was singing. The gentleman replied, "It is by Mahjoor Sharif." "Mahjoor Sharif?" Sahni asked with curiosity, "Where does he live?" The gentleman said with all his confidence, "He lives far away, in Ajmer Sharif." Balraj Sahni felt disgusted as he says, "He proved to be a liar. On returning to Srinagar I learnt, but not without difficulty, that Mahjoor's full name was Ghulam Ahmad and he was a *Patwari* in the nearby district of Sopore."

During the last sixty or seventy years, Kashmiri literature has undergone many new experiments which enriched its treasures adding to it new species of drama, novel, travelogue, humour and satire and translations of classics from different languages of the world including Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Russian, Urdu,

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English, Bengali, Marathi, Hindi, Malayalam, Punjabi and etc.

In October 1947, after the tribal raid, the entire Kashmiri nation woke up to the situation and bound itself into the bonds of nationalism and patriotism.

It was during those turbulent days that Kashmiri writers and other intellectuals got together and wrote mind blowing poems and other poetic compositions warning the raider to vacate the occupied territory of Kashmir.

A unique collection of such revolutionary poems was compiled and brought out in April 1948 by the National Cultural Front in Srinagar with Pir Abdul Ahad Shah, Shivdhan Singh Chauhan and Ghulam Rasool Renzu being its compilers.

Among those whose poems were included in the collection were Maulana Mohammad Sayed Masoodi, Mahjoor, Nadim, Arif, Roshan, Makhdoom , Prem Dhavan, Zinda Kaul, Azad and Vishvanath Dhar Mah who contributed to this publication titled *Gaye ja Kashmir* (Sing O Kashmir).

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In its preface, the editors say, "The movement of collective singing provides the people with right perception of resistance against tyranny and aggression and this poetry assumes the shape of popular folklore within days. The Chinese nation was the first one to acknowledge the power of song when they used collective singing against the Japanese."

Around the same time, one more Kashmiri publication *Yaavan Nahej* The Path of Youth) was published comprising selective pieces of progressive prose and poetry disseminating the ideals of literature of life.

Yavan Nahej, published in 1951, was contributed to by a number of noted progressive writers of Kashmir including Mahjoor, Mirza Arif, Abdul Ahad Azad, Dina Nath Nadim, Noor Mohammad Roshan & Ghulam Nabi Ariz,

It was in 1989 that political situation in Kashmir took a very unsavoury turn when armed resistance movement got off to its bloody start claiming more than one lakh human lives between 1990 and 2010 AD.

The Kashmiri literature today is, therefore and obviously, full of the expression of agony of

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man and is now an embodiment of prayers and supplication that Kashmir, once called the Paradise of Earth, regains its lost peace and glory and returns back to a normal land of love and tranquility.

Still, literature carrying message of progressivism and love for eternal humanity is very much seen in Kashmir's modern literary world.

In 1947, when communal riots flared up in the wake of the partition of the sub-continent, more than six lakh Indians and Pakistanis were butchered by frenzy mobs of hatred, violence and barbaric instincts. At that time, the total population of Kashmiri Hindus was a little over two percent as against a massive majority of the Kashmiri Muslims. But not a single non Muslim received even a scratch on his body by his Muslim brethren. Mahjoor Appealed to the people of his mother land:

Nyaay traaviv maay thaaviv paana waani
Poz mohabbat baagraviv paana waani

(Say no to abhorrence and have affection for each other,

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Distribute among yourselves the true love) This spirit of mutual brotherhood and secular outlook never changed in the minds of progressive writers.

For instance, in April 1964, when this writer read out a patriotic poem at a rally held by the Plebiscite Front in the premises of Martyrs' graveyard in old city of Srinagar, at the behest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who was presiding over the function and one of its lines ran as under:

The Holy Quran is the guide of our souls and we also hold the Bhagwad Gita in great reverence.

The entire audience of thousands of people got up to their feet and clapped along with Abdullah, Maulana Masoodi and Mirza Afzal Beig for nearly fifteen minutes. Such was the forceful effect of my poem mainly for its being a patriotic song of Kashmir. This ideology of Kashmiri intellectuals is very much alive today despite wanton attacks mounted on the Kashmiri ethos and its humanistic values which could only be nourished and cherished in a free pluralistic society.

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CHAPTER THREE

Kashmiri laṇguage and literature

Sir George Abraham Grierson (1851-1941), from whose works I have quoted freely in this chapter, was an outstanding western linguist; the compiler of the first *Dictionary of Kashmiri Language* (1932) and eleven-volume *Linguistic Survey of India*, has placed Kashmiri under the Dardic group of languages. He has classified Dardic languages under three major groups: One) The Kafir Group, Two) The Khowar or Chitrali Group and Three) The Dard Group. According to his classification the Dard Group includes Shina, Kashmiri, Kashtwari, Poguli, Siraji, Rambani and Kohistani – the last comprising Garwi, Torwali and Maiya. Grierson considered the Dardic languages to be a sub-family of the Aryan languages "neither of Indian nor of Iranian origin, but (forming) a third branch of the Aryan stock, which separated from the parent stem after the branching forth of the original of the Indian

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languages, but before the Iranian languages had developed all their peculiar characteristics"

He has further observed that Dardic is only a geographical convention. Morgenstern (1902-1977) has placed Kashmiri under the Dardic Group of Indo-Aryan languages along with Kashtwari and other dialects, which are strongly influenced by Dogri.

Fussman (1972) has based his work on that of Morgenstern's classification. He has also emphasised that the Dardic is a geographic and not a linguistic expression. According to Chatterjee (1963:256) Kashmiri has developed like other Indo-Aryan languages out of the Indo-European family of languages and is to be considered as a branch of Indo-Aryan like Hindi, Punjabi etc. There has been little linguistically oriented dialect research on Kashmiri.

Dialects are of two types: (a) Regional dialect, and (b) Social dialect. Regional dialects are of two types (1) those regional dialects or variations which are spoken within the Valley of Kashmir, and (2) those which are spoken in the regions outside the Valley of Kashmir.

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Kashmiri speaking area in the Valley of Kashmir is divided into three regions: (1) Maraz (southern and south eastern region), 2. Kamraz (northern) and north-western region), and 3. Srinagar; and its neighboring areas. There are some minor linguistic variations in Kashmiri spoken in these areas. The main variations are, being phonological and the usage of certain vocabulary items.

Since Kashmiri spoken in Srinagar has gained some social prestige, very frequent style switching takes place from Marazi or Kamrazi styles to the style of speech spoken in Srinagar. This phenomenon of 'style switching' is very common among the educated speakers of Kashmiri. Kashmiri spoken in Srinagar and surrounding areas continues to hold the prestige of being the standard variety and is used in education, mass media and literature.

Along with some oldest languages in India like Sanskrit, the classical language of the Hindu scriptures, Tamil is the oldest living language in the south of the country, Kashmiri has also been reported to be nearly 5,000 years old. This claim

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is testified with the excavations in Burzahama where the first Kashmiri inhabitants lived in dwelling pits during the Neolithic period of the history. Obviously, these people spoke the language which could be rightly described as Kashmiri for, they would not be in know of any other dialect or language except the medium of expression originated from their own land.

Kashmiri Language is spoken primarily in Kashmir Valley. According to the 2001 census, India had about 5,554,496 Kashmiri speakers. Even about 105,000 Kashmiri speakers in Pakistan are mostly the immigrants of 1947 and 1965 from the Valley, who migrated in the aftermath of wars that broke our between India and Pakistan.

Kashmiri Language basically belongs to the geographical linguistic sub-grouping called the Dardic part of the Indo-European Language Family. It is also one of the scheduled regional languages of the Indian Constitution and is the regional language of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the *History of Kashmiri Language* by Trilokinath Raina, "Kashmiri has an interesting linguistic history. Like the other

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North Indian languages, it branched off from the Indo-Aryan Sanskrit, but had another ancestor before that- the Shina languages of the Indo-Iranian family. But when mighty Sanskrit came, Shina was thickly overlaid. From about the 14th century, medieval Persian too started creeping into Kashmiri. With such foreign influences, the Kashmiri language boasts of peculiarities like certain vowel and consonant sounds which no other Indian language has. Kishtwari is the most popular dialect of Kashmiri. It is said that Kashmiri is the only Dardic Language with a literature."

LITERATURE

Kashmiri has a recorded literature covering about seven centuries. According to Abdul Ahad Azad, the literature created by Lalla Arifa and Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani in 14th century AD, could be a refreshed and developed chapter in continuity of a glorious past of the Kashmiri literature which has been lost with the passage of time. In his view, the poetry composed by Lalla and Sheikhul Aalam cannot be adjudged as the beginning of any cultural era because it has all the ingredients of maturity, impressive

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communication, high standard of poetic excellence and a very pleasant diction and treatment of the subject.

In comparison with other contemporary Indian languages, Kashmiri has the privilege of having a rich treasure of literature both in prose and poetry of a very high standard. This has been acknowledged by the country's noted linguists and critics from time to time.

Kashmiri Language is spoken primarily in Kashmir Valley.

About the royal and magnificent Chinar tree of Kashmir, it is traditionally believed that this gigantic tree was brought into Kashmir by the Mughals.

But we find a clear mentioning of Chinar (*Booni* in Kashniri) in a V*aakh* of Lalla wherein she compares a good and comforter wife with a shady Chinar. Leaving aside the theory of the origin of Chinar in Kashmir Valley, it is somehow amazing how Lalla could put foresee out of her sheer poetic imagination, progressive thought and masterly farsightedness the symbol of similarity between a noble woman and the Chinar tree.

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This *Vaakh* also depicts that Lalla's period was the new phase of a huge treasure of lost Kashmiri literature created over countless years before 14th century AD.

In fact, the evergreen poetry of Lalla and Sheikhul Alam are an embodiment of universality which makes any poetic composition immortal in its thought content and speaks of those imaginative issues which could ultimately be faced by the man kind even after centuries.

Today, when the entire world is worried about global warming which can bring about ecological disaster also due to indiscriminate and drying up of green forests on the upper reaches across the world, Sheikhul Alam categorically spoke of this sensitive subject when he said, *An poshi teli yeli wan poshi,* (We will have food grains available only if forests are protected). How the poet saint could visualise this when forests were not being destroyed during his period.

Azad's assertion therefore is more than authentic that Lalla-Sheikh era was not the beginning of the Kashmiri poetry.

The recorded history of Kashmiri literature is as old as that of current English

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language. The first English poet, Chaucer, composed his *Canterbury Tales* when Lalla Arifa sang to the tune of eternal love, universal brotherhood and immortal values of humanity more than six centuries ago. It is rather unfortunate that on one side, English is now spoken and patronised by hundreds of millions of people across the globe but on the other, facing hostile tirades of indifference and suppression unabatedly, Kashmiri has at last been pushed against the wall with its confinement to a small Vale of Kashmir where also some alien languages and much smaller dialects are menacingly trying to force its near eradication, of course, with the active support of politically motivated authorities and other forces from outside Kashmir.

In his evergreen book, *The Valley of Kashmir*, Walter R. Lawrence elaborates upon the sad state of this language saying, "Kashmiri language has never been considered worthy of study by the foreigners who have ruled the country for so many generations, and with the exception of the Pandits there are practically no officials who can do more than give simple orders in Kashmiri.

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This is to be regretted." Ironically, he makes an interesting comparison of both English and Kashmiri in a way that brings them closed to each other at least in one respect. He says, "the accent of the Kashmiri language is curiously like the English, and I have often, when listening to Kashmiris, imagined that an Englishman was speaking."

It was a very unfortunate development for the people of Kashmir in particular that in 1953, when the State government headed by the then prime minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was dismissed, as a result of a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched by vested political interests, this language of the masses of Kashmir was suddenly taken out of all the schools in Kashmir where it was being taught conveniently and successfully with a new and modernised script which had been evolved and adopted for it after years of deliberations involving great efforts of the eminent local linguists. No explanation whatever was ever offered till date as to why Kashmiri was banished from the cradle of its primary education that too from its own birthplace. This illogical act was undoubtedly reflective of an

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old saying that to kill a nation and its identity, one should strike at its language. The language however proved to be too strong to succumb to such political onslaughts mounted against it with most sinister designs. Luckily, the teaching of Kashmiri language in all the schools, from 1st to 12th classes, across Kashmiri Valley has been decided after a gap of more than half-a-century by the State government, which is to be appreciated as a very positive step towards the growth of this language of the masses of Kashmir and many parts of Jammu region.

The progressive literature in Kashmiri added new dimensions to its themes, outlook of a lively life, man's supremacy over all other creatures, and not to abandon hope even under most unfavorable and painful circumstances.

In fact this movement is mainly responsible to bestow the literatures of Kashmir with all those elements of excellence which have made the modern Kashmiri literatures, poetry in particular, comparable to any advanced contemporary literature of any Indian language.

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CHAPTER FOUR
Genesis of Progressive Writings in Kashmiri

The progressive writers' movement which got off to its start with a bang in Kashmir during early fifties of the twentieth century was not actually indigenous or an offshoot of any local inspiration.

In fact, The Indian progressive Writers' Association was set up in London 1n 1935, followed by forming of the All India Writers Association in Lucknow on 10 April 1936 under the leadership of Syed Sajjad Zaheer. The movement was carried forward with the establishment of the Association in Calcutta in July 1936.

Urdu writers associated with the movement were anti-imperialistic and left oriented. They sought to inspire people through their writings

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advocating equality and forging resilience against social injustice and backwardness. "Progressive Writers Movement in Urdu literature was the strongest movement after Sir Syed's education movement. The progressivism contributed to Urdu literature with some of the finest pieces of fiction and poetry. Undoubtedly, they were the trend setters for the coming generation of writers, and their role cannot be denigrated or denied." (*Dawn*, Karachi, 1st October 2004)

In Kashmir, it did have direct impact of Pakistani raid on Kashmir in 1947 which invoked the local writers against the unwarranted invasion from the western front and they all rose in one voice to condemn this act aimed at grabbing the beautiful valley of Kashmir by force.

Earlier, the Russian Revolution brought about in 1917 by hapless workers, peasants and labourers under the leadership of Viladimir Lenin changed the course of history.

Breaking out of two world wars in 1919 and 1939 and Korean war which was fought later in June 1950, bringing the large parts of the globe to the brink of disaster, were very strong factors for the Kashmiri writers to rise to the occasion

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and fight out the forces of suppression and oppression.

The Indian freedom movement for liberation from The British Colonisers also added fuel to the emotional fire of patriotism into the Kashmiri progressive literary movement.

In order to infuse high spirit of progressive ideology and thinking among the Kashmiris, many Urdu and Hindi writers and intellectuals visited Kashmir frequently and held debates and discussions under the banner of Cultural Front. Among them mention may be made of Makhdoom Mohiuddin, Ali Sardar Jafri, Rajinder Singh Bedi, Sheila Bhatia, Sajjad Zaheer, Balraj Sahni, Shivdhan Singh Chauhan, Dhanvantri, Kamal Ahmad Siddiqi and Ramanand Sagar.

Shivdhan Singh Chauhan, who was prominently involved in the movement, contributed a lot while explaining and propagating Marxist philosophy and its cultural and literary aspects.

In his thought provoking article titled *The Struggle for Peace and the people of Kashmir,* published in *Kong Posh*, he writes, "These days, the forces of terror and peace are eye ball to eye ball against each other so that the possibility of

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a third world war is not averted. Imperialist powers are dumping billions of Dollars to manufacture deadly atomic weapons. The people, through various means of media are frightfully put to a shivering state of mind that a new and devastating war shall have to take place, sooner or later.

"We must therefore ponder upon the fact whether the people of Kashmir choose to associate themselves with the war mongers or with peace lovers.

"We have no enemy but the imperialistic feudal. The people of Russia and China are our friends. Even the people of the United States and England are our friends. The *nawwabs* and rich forces of Pakistan are our foes but the peace loving and progressive people of that country are our dear friends; We Kashmiris are friends of all neighbouring states who are broadminded and progressive. Along with them, we also have to preserve our freedom and peace, so that we are able to build a democratic social order based on the people's manifesto of New Kashmir."

After Cultural Front, the organisation assumed the name of Cultural Congress and then its

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nomenclature was changed to Cultural Conference. In order to streamlining its working, the Association was then known as having three wings, progressive writers association, progressive artists association and progressive painters association.

In 1951, elections to the Conference were held. Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq was elected as its president, Justice Jia Lal Kilam, Mahjoor and Abdul Rahman Rahat as vice presidents, Dina Nath Nadim was made the general secretary, Sheila Bhatia, the secretary, and Miss Mehmooda Ahmad Ali Shah became the treasurer. Rahman Rahi, Noor Mohammad Roshan and Som Nath Bhat were chosen as general secretaries respectively of the writers, artists and painters wings. To furthering the cause of progressive theatre, Pran Kishore played most significant role by way of his being part and parcel of various theatrical performances and other plays whether broadcast form Radio or staged at different places. After his leaving Kashmir, he also made fame for himself outside the Valley when his popular television serial *Gul, Gulshan, Gulfam* became a household name for millions of TV

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viewers across the country. This serial was based upon the typical life of the Kashmiri boatmen, their joys and sorrows, good and bad days; the community which earns its bread and butter essentially depending on tourist traffic into Kashmir Valley.

The progressive movement begining on a very small scale, soon became a popular literary catchword for a number of local writers who joined its rank and file voluntarily and were found quite eager to contribute their mite to enrich Kashmiri literary world through this association. Among these enthusiastic intellectuals mention may be made of Abdul Sattar Aasi, Ghulam Nabi Ariz, Abdul Sattar Ranjoor, Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beig Arif, Dina Nath Nadim, Amin Kamil, Ghulam Nabi Firaq, Noor Mohammad Roshan, Rahman Rahi, Nand Lal Ambardar, Shyam lal Dhar Bahar, Dina Nath Walli Almast, Amar Chand Wali, Aziz Haroon, Som Nath Zutshi, Abdul Majid Sair, Pran Kishore, Abdul Rahman Rahat as the stalwarts of the movement. Among other comrades belonging to the organisation were Akhtar Mohiuddin, Bansi Nirdosh, Habib Kamran,

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Akbar Ladakhi, Taj Begum Renzu, Umesh Kaul, Prem Nath Premi, Arjun Dev Majboor, Tej Bahadur Bhan, Shridhar Raina Zaar, Moti Lal Saqi, Mohammad Abdullah Arij, Triloki Nath Kundan, Deepak Kaul, Chaman Lal Chaman, Makhan Lal Bekas, Fariq Budgami, Muzaffar Azim and Ghulam Nabi Khayal.

The progressive writers got united and started making the movement most effective and inspiring. Those days its meetings were regularly held on each Friday wherein participants would read out their creative writings according to the agenda, to be followed by a very impartial and honest discussion of critical analysis. The meetings would last for hours together and sometimes they would disperse late in the night.

At the outset, some prominent writers began writing in Urdu and not in Kashmiri, their mother tongue, but with the passage of time they realised that they could not express their experiments forcefully and in a manner that the readers would feel alike, in any language other than their own mother tongue. Therefore, after sometime they switched over to Kashmiri and produced

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marvelous specimen of poetry which are quite relevant even today.

A few of shabby examples of their Urdu writings are given here as specimen:

Bhadka na sake aag jo tadpa na sake khoon
Us shaair-e-be sharm be imaan ko badal do
(The one who can't cause boiling of blood,
That faithless poet is to be dumped)

(Nadim)

Kis ko deta hai tu dhamki Atom bam ki
(Whom are you frighetining
With the threat of your atomic bomb?)

(Kamil)

Lenin wutch me khaabas andar doal wayaan
I saw Lenin in my dream, and he was beating a drum)

(Ambardar)

For the sake of the dissemination of Marx' philosophy, our senior writers would always teach us to read only Marxist literature and nothing else. In this regard they invariably mentioned *Das Kapital* and *Red Book* of Mao Tse Tung.

On one side, the movement was making strides in full swing, but on other, the State Prime

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Minister, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, was cautioned by his sycophants that this kind of literary onslaught was near completion to be mounted on the social as well as political set up of Kashmir. In his own world of politicking, Bakhshi was always seen as anti communist and a politician who wanted power with peace. He soon got off to divide the ranks of the progressive writers. For this purpose, he readily found some of the opportunists who had made their entry into the movement probably only to shatter its imposing existence. Bakhshi's brother, Bakhshi Majeed soon came to the rescue of these plotters and offered free accommodation in his sprawling building Munir Manzil, in Regal Chowk, Srinagar, to the defectors who formed a small outfit against the movement and called it Kashmir Cultural Forum. Shamim Ahmad Shamim became the mastermind of this division. Despite his desperate efforts and assurances to many writers of benefits and favours, he was joined only by Amin Kamil, Habib Hamidi and a couple of his so called friends.

Kamil probably obliged Shamim for his being a relative of latter's family. He soon realised that

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he has chosen a wrong path for his impressive literary ventures. He bade good bye to this motivated Forum and returned back to rank and file of the progressives.

After Shamim got a job in the State information department, this Forum died its own death, unsung and with nobody mourning in the words of Peer Ghayasuddin, "the death of this illegitimate child of a b.....d."

In the meetings of the Association, names of Mahjoor and Prem Nath Pardesi were mentioned time and again with all reverence and regard for these luminaries of the literary world of Kashmir who were no more with us. I had never met these torch bearers of the movement. Mahjoor had died in April 1952 and Pardesi passed away in 1955. To pay my tributes to Pardesi, I wrote a Kashmiri poem on him which was first published in Urdu magazine *Rahi* published from Jalandhar and then included in my first poetic collection *Pragaash* brought out in 1962.

Marx and Lenin had become house hold names for all of us and any instance related to them or China or Mao Tse Tung would be taken as blessing for the movement.

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In December 1955, when Russian leaders Nikita Khrushchev and Marshal Bulganin, visited Kashmir, they were taken out in a procession which passed just through outside the office of the Association. We had prepared bouquets and garlands to receive them. It was however Nadim who succeeded shaking hands with Khrushchov.

After that, Nadim became most honoured comrade who had been bestowed with the privilege of a warm hand-shake with the most powerful Russian leader.

Bulganin and Khrushchov were given grand reception by the State government and the traditional Kashmiri hospitality was extended to them by a generous Prime Minister Bakhshi. On December 10, Bakhshi gave a reception in honour of Russian leaders, wherein Khrushchov spoke also about Kashmir. It will be very pertinent to quote some of the excerpts from his speech he made at the reception. These observations seem to be quite relevant even today. Khrushchov said, " Religion is a matter for the conscience of each individual and each nation. Our delegation includes Jabar Rasulov,

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Zukhra Rakhimbabayava and Sharaf Rashidov, representatives of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, whose people profess the Mohammadan faith. But in what way do our Moslems differ from members of other faiths, we make no such distinction. And about Kashmir dispute he said, "Our attitude to this question is as clear-cut and definite as it could be. The Soviet Union has always maintained that the political status of Kashmir is a matter to be decided by the people of Kashmir themselves, in accordance with the principles of democracy and in the interest of promoting friendly relations among the people of this area."

When Dina Nath Nadim visited China, he returned wearing a blue coat and propagating that it had been given to him by Mao Tse Tung as a special gift. This coat soon became an icon of our affection and love. Who knows if Mao had really given his own coat to Nadim?

Since it was a general practice in the association that no participant would read out any of his poems which spoke of death and escapism, poems or prose writings would be appreciated if they only sang of everlasting life and its

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eternity, and moreover, which had the sympathy and solidarity for labourers, workers and downtrodden people.

In this context, I quote two instances which created uproar in the meetings of the Conference.

Being a new comer, I had no idea of these rules and bindings. I read out a poem the last couplet of which ran as under:

Shoqa saan aayoay dilbar goakh waatith und mazaar

Kyah Khayalo darshunah gode kerzi hai ada merzi hai

(Your beloved came to meet you, but you embraced the grave;

O Khayal, you should have met her first and died afterwards.)

A number of participants in the meeting took strong exception to this poem which spoke of death. They branded me as an escapist and a confused young man who had no concept of life. At this juncture when I was about to be shown the door, Dina Nath Nadim came to my rescue telling others that I was still a young boy and would gradually understand the pros and cons of the progressive philosophy. This calmed down

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the agitators because Nadim's word was taken as the last word.

In a similar happening, Rahman Rahi recited an Urdu poem titled *The Death and the Virgin.* In this lengthy poem, the poet had finally seen to it that death overcame the virgin and she died.

This was also objected to by the writers present in the meeting that a senior comrade like Rahi shouldn't have spoken of death and left alive a cruel man, the main character in the poem. Rahi however startled one and all when he disclosed that the poem under discussion was not his own creation but it was written by Maxim Gorky. This caused a newly generated onslaught on Rahi who was asked to explain whether he was a real progressive or not?

Some writers called him a fifth columnist and a person who was in the Conference as a fake comrade and not as a sincere one. Rahi had to cut a sorry figure.

Many years later, in 2009, Rahi disclosed before me that it was Shivdhan Singh Chuahan who had pursued him to play this trick. Nobody knows what the real truth is.

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Among all progressive writers, Abdul Ahad Azad can genuinely be described as the most dedicated and committed poet and chronicler. Besides his voluminous collection of poetry, his memorable and monumental work of research, *Kashmiri Zabaan aur Shaayiri* is in fact the milestone of our literary research. This work, done in Urdu and comprising three volumes of as many as 1,100 pages, deals with the lives and works of almost all the Kashmiri poets from the beginning in 14th century till his own time.

Azad died very young when he was only in forties, but left behind a rich treasure of his works both in Kashmiri and Urdu languages. He was a true Marxist having an unflinching faith in this philosophy. His poems *Russian Revolution, Marxism, Imperialism, The labourer,* and some more poetic creations on this subject bear testimony to his being a real progressive poet. Besides, his dissemination of high values of humanism depicted in his poetry makes Azad an embodiment of his own personal characteristics and belief.

Azad was only 14-year old when the Proletarian revolution brought about in the Soviet Union in

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1917 by great leaders like Lenin presented a new concept of society before the entire world and in particular to those poor nations where imperialists had been suppressing ruthlessly the poor and the downtrodden for years together. This Communist revolution must also have been responsible to impart the ideals of equality of mankind in Azad's mind which he gradually made one of his favorite subjects.

In 1919, when the First World War broke out, Azad was a budding youth and his sensitivity must have observed deeply the impact of the bloodshed which finally engulfed the entire world in 1939 in an ugly shape of the Second World War taking the heaviest ever toll of sixty million human lives.

Azad also witnessed the simmering freedom movement in Kashmir which received a boost on 13 July 1931 when Dogra forces shot dead about two dozen Kashmiris outside the Central Jail in Srinagar where a large crowd had gathered to witness the trial the State had initiated against one Abdul Qadeer who had spoken against the government at a rally at the shrine of *Khanqahi Mualla* in old Srinagar a few days ago.

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Azad was also very much absorbed in having an in depth study of independence movements launched in India and subsequently in Kashmir with the slogan of Quit Kashmir raised in 1946 by the popular leader Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his associates.

At this juncture Azad also gave a message of awakening to his sleeping countrymen and called upon them to fight for their honour and freedom against forces of oppression.

He also watched with deep wounds inflicted on his psyche when the partition of the sub-continent took place in 1947 and more than six lakh Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were butchered in unprecedented communal riots.

All these developments made Azad a staunch lover of humanity and the human being.

Abdul Ahad Azad's writings of his progressive outlook need to be extensively elaborated as his being the towering revolutionary poet of Kashmir who laid strong foundations in this language of modern thought, humanism and progressivism. He was a true Marxist and had staunch belief in the human being's progressivism and his endurance to fight out

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the evil powers of intimidation against a common man. In his poem *Marxism,* he pays glowing tributes to this great philosopher and the founder of Marxist philosophy. This poem may not be adjudged as a fine piece of poetry but his expression of reverence and regard for Marx speaks volumes of his faith in progressivism, the savior of mankind. He says:

Deen temi sund fitratuk aayina daar,
Naara draamut son bahaaran hund bahaar
(His faith is a mirror of nature.
He is like pure gold and spring of the springs)

Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor, locally the most popular poet, was first introduced to the outside world by Balraj Sahni, himself a progressive artist and a great theatre and film actor. He wrote an interesting article in English in *Visva Bharati Quarterly*, a periodical of a very high quality founded by Ranbindranath Tagore and published from Shanti Niketan in Bengal. In this journal, Sahni writes, "When his, Mahjoor's, work takes him to the capital city of Srinagar he walks through the streets unnoticed. And yet his songs and his poems are the cherished property of every man, woman and child living between

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Baramullah and Pir Panchal. If Mahjoor writes a poem today, it will be on the lips of the populace within a fortnight. Children on their way to school, girls thrashing rice, boatman plying the paddle, labourers bending in their ceaseless toil, all will be singing it. In a predominately illiterate country where, if such things were marketed in printed form not more than ten copies would sell, such a broadcasting system is almost impossible."

Despite this attitude of negligence of the people about their favourite poet, Mahjoor stole the show from all his contemporaries including Azad, Arif, Fazil, Aasi and others also due to his availing the services of a couple of folk singers Mahmood Shehri and Ghaffar Lojur who would sing his fresh songs across the Valley of Kashmir making him the poet of the people within no time.

At the same time, Mahjoor himself was a conscious poet. He had been traveling around the Valley when in the service of the revenue department as a *patwari* which provided him ample opportunities to feel the beat of the pulse of the people so closely and minutely that he

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wrote for them and for all that which they liked or experienced. Many of his songs have therefore the colour of folklore which he adopted for his being among the people's heart and to represent their emotions and sentiments through his pen.

Mahjoor was lucky and blessed enough among all his contemporaries that he attained popularity as the National Poet of Kashmir during his life time. When he passed away in April 1952 in his native village of Mitrigam in south Kashmir, his body was exhumed and brought to Srinagar where his last rites were performed officially. Today, the renovated monument of his resting place in Athwajan, a few miles away in the east of Srinagar has now been made into a mausoleum worthy of this great poet of patriotism, humanity, freedom and immense love for people and abounding beauties of his motherland-Kashmir.

Until now, Mahjoor has been the only Kashmiri poet about whom one full length movie was made in Kashmiri and also in Urdu languages. Thanks again to his friend, Balraj Sahni, who undertook the project and accomplished the task successfully. The film was made under the direction of a seasoned Bengali director, Prabhat

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Mukherjee and Mahjoor's role was played by no one else other than Sahni's own son Ajay Sahni, now Parikhshit Sahni in the Indian filmworld of Mumbai.

Balraj Sahni, a renowned theatre personality and a progressive artist of repute, had great affection for the people of Kashmir who had lived in darker days of slavery and exploitation for centuries under the ruthless rules of Sikhs, Pathans and then Dogra Maharajas.

Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beig Arif was one of the founders of the progressive movement in Kashmir and during his being closely associated with the movement he wrote some pathetic poems depicting the agony and miseries of hapless and subjugated Kashmiri people. His poem about the labourers scaling the treacherous *Bahihal* Mountain pass on foot in severe cold while traveling to Jammu from Srinagar and *Khoja sund Dussa* woven by men in poverty, are fine examples of his progressive literary contribution.

It was rather unfortunate that Arif soon left the movement and set up a parallel organisation *Kashmir Bazm-e-Adab* which was also joined

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by Abdul Haq Barq, Amin Kamil, Mohiuddin Hajini and one Abdul Qadir Kubravi. Arif started the publication of a trilingual monthly *Gulrez*. This journal did serve the cause of Kashmiri language and literature but its outlook remained to counter the progressivism or communism and only few writings by progressive writers could find place on its pages. *Gulrez* was brought out in three languages: Kashmiri, Urdu and occasionally some pieces also in Persian.

Dina Nath Kaul Nadim, the torch bearer and doyen of modern progressive Kashmiri literature, emerged as a luminary to propagate the progressive writings and contributed a lot to enrich the seven-hundred old recorded Kashmiri poetry with his revolutionary poetry, short stories and operas which he wrote in Kashmiri for the first time. He is also acclaimed as the first ever writer of Kashmiri short story *Jawabi Card* which was published in Kong Posh in its issue of April 1950.

The former chief minister of Jammu & Kashmir State and a progressive intellectual, Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, writes about Nadim, "The apocalyptic change that came in Kashmir with

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1947 led to the new poets setting their sights afresh and the emergence of Nadim as the new leader. The poet became the people's articulate voice against feudal rule, exploitation, war and imperialist designs on the Valley of Kashmir. While much that was written was of Valley of Kashmir, there is no doubt that it was in this crucible of experiment with new forms and new themes that modern Kashmiri poetry had its new birth."

Braj K Kachru elaborates on the works of Nadim saying, "It was during this unexpected political turmoil in the otherwise calm Valley that Dina Nath Nadim came to the limelight. He has remained in the forefront of the Kashmiri literary scene ever since.

In the not-so-uncommon Indian tradition Nadim's mother had a significant influence on his growth as a poet, especially after his father Pandit Shankar Kaul died when Nadim was only eight years old. Nadim's widowed mother would sing the *Vaakhs* of Lalla and would recite *Leelas* of other poets and an occasional composition of her own to the boy and his sister. Her repertoire of Kashmiri poems was large since she originally

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came from a village Muran where the oral tradition of poetry was part of the culture.

The total number of Nadim's poems is around one hundred and fifty including those in English, Hindi, and Urdu. Like his predecessors and some contemporaries, his decision to write in Kashmiri was delayed one. Nadim's poetic career did not really start until late 1930s; before that he had composed some poems in English. Between 1938 and 1946, he wrote mainly in Urdu - and some poems in Hindi - under the influences of the Kashmiri Pandit poet Brij Narain Chakbast, Josh Malihabadi and Ehsan bin-Danish. This was essentially a period of apprenticeship under the ideological influences of Hinduism, Sufis and Khayyam. Nadim was trying to discover himself and his linguistic medium. He finally selected Kashmiri for, as he has said, "my mother tongue has greater claim on me."

This realisation resulted in Nadim's almost exclusive concentration on Kashmiri. He had written his first Kashmiri poem in 1942 on *Moaj Kasheer*, an appropriate topic for a time when Kashmir was also passing through a critical phase

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with the mass movement slogan of "Quit India" challenging the British colonial rule on India. A handful of Kashmiri writers were expressing political sentiments ornately embroidered with *gul-o-bulbul* imagery, but Nadim did not become fully part of the movement until 1946. It was then in a *mushaira* organised by a fellow poet, Arif, that Nadim read out his poem *soanth*, followed by *Graav;* both poems of patriotism, revolution and freedom. Here, he is asking the kind of questions which members of the progressive writers' movement were already asking in other parts of India.

Nadim's *Sahitya Akademi* award winning collection of poetry *Shihily Kul* was published posthumously after his death but it is full of all sorts of mistakes, linguistic as well as grammatical. Also, many of his poems published in several Kashmiri magazines have not been included in the compilation. This needs to be done seriously so that the departed soul of an outstanding son of the soil rests in everlasting peace.

Abdul Sattar Aasi was an illiterate person, a labourer doing menial job of carrying gunny bag

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loads in the commercial market of Hari Singh High Street in Srinagar. He would always carry a note book and a pencil in his pocket to pen down his random thoughts in the form of poetry which, if weighed on the scale of analysis, cannot be described as good poetry. Being a labourer himself, his main concern was the plight of working class. He therefore addressed his poems to his fellow poor brethren invoking them to rise in rebellion against the tyrannical rulers of the time. In the words of Mahjoor, "Had Aasi lived for some more years he would have surely made a mark as a good poet of the people."

Akhtar Mohiuddin got off to his literary start in mid-fifties as an Urdu story writer and it was within no time that he was acknowledged as one of the noted short story writers in Urdu. During that epoch making period, there was a galaxy of luminaries shining on the horizon of Urdu fiction among whom were included stalwarts like Saadat Hassan Mantoo, Krishen Chander, Khawaja Ahmad Abbas, Sajjad Zaheer, Ashfaq Ahmad, Shaukat Siddiqui, Mahender Nath, Suhail Azimabadi, Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi, Mumtaz Shireen, Hajira Masroor, Khateeja

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Mastoor, Ghulam Abbas, Aziz Ahmad, Mirza Adeeb, Kausar Chandpuri, Upendar Nath Ashk, Ram Lal, Hansraj Rahbar; Quratul Ain Haider, Devinder Satyarthi, Mumtaz Mufti, Ali Abbas Hussaini, Rajinder Singh Bedi, Balwant Singh, Prakash Pandit and many others having contributed or contributing their short stories, essays, novels and plays to the literary world of Urdu language.

When Akhtar's Urdu short story titled *Poundrich* was published in a Delhi-based newspaper, it was given an award in an international competition of short stories. This honour would obviously make Akhtar proud of his contribution to the Urdu fiction, but he did not lose time to make his choice and soon shifted to his own mother tongue and again within a few months time, Akhtar Mohiuddin emerged as the best short story writer in Kashmiri language.

Rehman Rahi, the sole Jnanpeth awardee among all the Kashmiri writers till date, is the leading poet of Kashmir today. He also began writing in Urdu but soon he realised, as Tagore had said, that, "an intellectual can reach the ocean

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of eternity through the stream of his own mother tongue."

Rahi has tremendous command over language and its lyricism. He deals with his subjects as a master of art and craft with all the artistic skill embellishing his sweet poetry. In my opinion, Rahi's most colourful and impressive poetry is which he composed up to eighties of 20th century. To cite a few, one may make mention of his poems like *Veyshaakhy ta rafgar,* , *Reh ta Raqs*, *Pai chu zulmaata vuzaan*, *Path agar yiyihe ti moatas waary* and many more among the best specimen of Kashmiri poetry.

Rahi also penned down a couple of books of criticism but at places, it seems clearly that his bringing under his critical analysis various aspects of the Kashmiri literature, does not stay away what may be called a subjective mind. Rahi is however better known and recognised as the most towering personality on top of poetic world of Kashmir.

Amin Kamil is a versatile genius, the one and only amongst the galaxy of Kashmiri writers who wrote not only good poetry but added to the language other species like short story, drama,

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novel, research, criticism, features and plays written for radio and theatrical performances.

In the first instance when Kamil started writing in Urdu, he was deeply influenced by Nadim. Later he became a challenger to Rahi. Rahi would compose a *ghazal* and within a weeks time Kamil would come out with his *ghazal* having same meter, rhyme and rhythm. But he didn't prove any match to Rahi in this game of competitive activity. However when Kamil appeared in his original colours making himself conscious about his own talent and capability, he composed poetry which had touched his sentiments. Thus he soon over came even Rahi as far as the sensitivity and sensibility of thought and expression is concerned.

This made him the most original poet of Kashmiri language.

Noor Mohammad Roshan introduced *rubayi* in Kashmiri poetry. His quatrains were always full of satire and sarcastic observations against the exploiters in the society.

He was a selfless worker in the progressive writers' movement till its disintegration. Besides, writing poetry which includes his most pathetic

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poem, *Chhe sai moaj aamitch shaheedo slaame* (O my martyr son, your mother has come to salute you), Roshan also took up the responsibility of editing *Kong Posh* along with Aziz Haroon and Ghulam Nabi Khayal before its closure in November 1956. He also translated into Kashmiri three plays of Tagore under the title of *Qurbaani* which were published in a book form by the Government Girls College, Maulana Azad Road, Srinagar where its principal Miss Mehmooda Ahmad Ali Shah was great patron of this writer.

Abdul Sattar Ranjoor was one of the most dedicated and committed writers of the Kashmir progressive literary movement. Ranjoor remained in the strong bonds of his communist ideology till his untimely death on 23 March 1990, when he was gunned down in his native town of Shopian in south Kashmir by unidentified terrorists probably for his being a communist which in their eyes is the definition of an atheist and infidel.

During his early days of composing poetry, Ranjoor was greatly influenced by Allama Iqbal. He joined the Kashmir freedom struggle and was

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also associated with the National Conference, the leading political organisation of the State. After some time, Ranjoor was made the general secretary of the Communist party of India, the party he remained associated with till his tragic end.

Ranjoor has penned down about two dozen books in Kashmiri and Urdu including Kashmiri translation of Khalil Jibran's *The Prophet.*

After Nadim, Ranjoor is the only Kashmiri poet who wrote numerous poems on the philosophy of communism and Marxism. Some of them are, *National Revolution, Ode to Kashmiri Peasant, Message of Peace,* written in the back ground of Hindu-Muslim riots of 1947, *To the Labourer of Red China, Tribute to Chinese Workers, The Battleground of Vietnam's Freedom* and many more.

Taj Begum Renzu was the first Kashmiri woman who joined the Cultural Conference and was soon recognised by the lovers of literature as a female short story writer of repute.

Though she authored only one collection of her short stories titled *Alaav* but even this small contribution ranked her among most

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acknowledged Kashmiri fiction writers like Akhtar, Kamil, Hari Krishen Kaul, Autar Kishen Rahbar, Dr Shankar Raina and Som Nath Zutshi.

Taj Begum's stories bear a sharp satire on our social set up created by exploiters in power whose morals are also torn up by their greed for money, luxury and oppression of their subordinates. One of her short stories created ripples in the official circles wherein she had illustrated developing of illicit relationship between a young and handsome driver of a powerful politician and his wife whom the ever busy husband never gave what she wanted as a passionate woman.

Ghulam Nabi Firaq associated himself with the Cultural Conference as a sincere intellectual right from its beginning. He was a silent and composed writer and would always listen attentively to the proceedings of the weekly meetings of the Conference. For some years, Firaq recorded the minutes of these meetings which were unfortunately lost. Otherwise they would have made a unique collection of impartial criticism of a very high order.

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Firaq spent most of his time in translating selected pieces of Western poets into Kashmiri among whom are included William, Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Edmond Spencer, S T Coleridge, P B Shelly, Mathew Arnold, T S Eliot, Robert Frost, John Keats, Wordsworth, Oscar Wilde, Tennyson and Sheikh Sadi, Ghalib, Iqbal, Tagore and Faiz.

His poetry as well as his collection of critical essays are very important segments of our progressive literary assets.

Ali Mohammad Lone began his career with joining Radio Kashmir as script writer where he wrote a number of *dramas*, plays, features, talks and editorials of the regular literary programmes.

After some years, he chose to shift to the Cultural Academy as its deputy secretary where, in a favourable literary atmosphere, he completed the Kashmiri translation of Gorky's *Mother* which also got him the Soviet Land Nehru Peace Award. Lone was one of the most active workers of the progressive movement. Gladly, and with his peculiar smile, Lone accomplished all tasks assigned to him including editing Urdu *Kong Posh*. He is recognised as one of the leading

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progressive writers in Kashmiri and Urdu languages.

Dina Nath Walli Almast was in fact a painter of realism who had painted numerous beauties and scenic spots of Kashmir particularly in the city of Srinagar but he also chose to contribute his mite to add to the Kashmiri poetry. His famous poem *Baala Apaari* describes the miseries of a Kashmiri labourer inflicted by disease and reducing him to a beggar in the hot and unbearable plains outside Kashmir when his family is eagerly waiting for him to return home. This is a pathetic piece of Kashmiri poetry.

Som Nath Zutshi was an enthusiastic worker of the movement who spend most of his time in strengthening the cause of progressivism and considered it as a pious mission. He edited *Kong Posh* and burnt his midnight oil to make this journal popular among the readers in particular and the people of Kashmir in general. His Kashmiri short story *Yeli Phol Gaash* is claimed to be the first piece of fiction in the language, but Dina Nath Nadim, while denying this assertion states that his short story *Jawaabi card* was the first ever short story

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written in Kashmiri. Nadim says that he wrote the story as back as in 1948 when it was broadcast from Radio Kashmir. The same year, "Zutshi wrote his story in February 1948," adds Nadim. Interestingly, both these short stories were published simultaneously in the April 1950 issue of *Kong Posh*.

Motilal Saqi, Chaman Lal Chaman, Muzaffar Azim, Makhan Lal Bekas and many more progressive writers were associated with the Conference till its disintegration in 1956, when the State regime headed by Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad lured many of the Conference stalwarts towards his side by way of providing them lucrative jobs. It was in this context that Nadim was made a member of the Legislative Council, Rahi got a job in S P College, Saqi and Chaman were employed in the State Cultural Academy and the strong bonds of progressivism in Kashmir were broken by its own founders and top ranking members:

Is ghar ko aag lag gayi ghar ke chiragh se

(This house was set on fire by its own burning lamp)

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The disintegration of the Cultural Conference in mid sixties of the 19th century, also took place with many disturbing developments taking place in J and K State. G M Sadiq, the then chief minister, founder and chief patron of the Kashmiri progressive literary movement, passed away in a Chandigarh hospital due to his kidney failure in December 1971.

This had been unfortunately preceded by a full scale India-Pakistan war in September 1965, when thousands of armed infiltrators crossed over the Ceasefire Line into Kashmir from its western borders. The people of Kashmir did not cooperate with these intruders and passed on the secret information to the authorities. The first informant was one Mohammad Din Gujjar from the border hills of Gulmarg. The Indian government conferred *Padma Shree* on Mohammad Din for his patriotism, but he was later gunned down by militants when yet another militancy got off to its bloody start in Kashmir in 1990. All these adverse happenings and the demise of Sadiq proved a fatal blow to a fading away progressive literary movement in Kashmir. Also, the conspirators within and reactionaries

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elements outside saw to it that this epoch making movement meets its end. And it happened with no one ever trying to revive it.

Since I am the only living writer among the fraternity of progressive Kashmiri writers, who was jailed for two years for his being "a Communist and obviously the enemy of the State," the following account of my imprisonment reproduced here might be of an interest of readers.

It was on 9 August 1953, when the Indian prime minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dismissed the government of Jammu & Kashmir state, headed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Nehru was his lifelong friend who put him behind the bars. Abdullah was first released on 8 January 1958.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdullah had assumed the stature of a popular leader all over Kashmir. During his brief spell of freedom, he addressed several public rallies in and around Srinagar city which I also attended covering my face with a long *Kantoap*. This I had to do because I was an employee in Radio Kashmir, Srinagar, and as a government servant, that too of the Central

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government, I was not supposed to attend the public meetings of a political rival who had turned into the bitterest opponent of the Indian state. I tried my best to escape the hawkish eyes of the intelligence personnel of the new state government headed by Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad. This, however, did not help, and, on the contrary, my presence in Abdullah's rallies was marked and reported to the higher quarters in the corridors of power.

At that time, I was also not in the good books of the government for my being an activist of the progressive writers movement, which was patronised by Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, the then education minister who, along with some of his like minded cabinet colleagues, had fallen apart from Bakhshi and resigned from the cabinet on some political differences.

The result of my clandestine activities came out very quickly and I was arrested.

It was in the afternoon of 23 February 1958, when I was returning home on my bicycle after doing my duty in Radio that just outside the Khanyar police station in downtown Srinagar, I was stopped by the police, dragged towards this

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nearby *thana,* dumped in a dingy and stinking *hawalaat* room and then, 12 days later, shifted to the Central Jail, Srinagar. No reason or explanation, whatever, was offered to me for my arrest except that every police man, especially, one *thanedar*, Mengi from Jammu, hurled selective abuses against Sheikh Abdullah, Pakistan and even Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. I have yet to understand why Mengi did this exercise in "fine oratory of dignified language." May be he tried to brow beat me considering that I was a "pro-Pakistan activist," and could be cowed own when I am subjected to worst type of brutality for being a pro-Pakistan youth which has never been my focus of liking.

Kashmir is a highly politicised state in the country for reasons known to every one. Under such circumstances, spread over more than 60 years, suppression of adverse thought or voice of dissent by various powers or detention of people including writers, journalists, lawyers, and other intellectuals on one pretext or the other is not anything that may be called unexpected or strange.

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Under the garb of similar accusations which caused my incarceration, the period of my detention lasted for not less than two years.

During those days, there were no draconian laws like Public Safety Act, Special Powers Act or Prevention of Terrorists Activities Act, and a political rival could not be detained without assigning any specific reason for the justification of the act.

Therefore, my co-accused, numbering about eighty, and myself were charged ridiculously under various sections of Ranbir Penal Code including 307 (attempt to murder), 398/399 (dacoity and robbery), 435 (destruction of property), 335/336 (stone pelting with inflicting injuries), 148 (rioting with deadly weapons), 149 (unlawful assembly), 452 (trespassing) and 120B (conspiracy against the State).

Two days earlier, on Friday, 21 February, on the eve of the following Friday of *Meraju-n-Nabi*, a bloody clash had taken place between pro-Bakhshi and pro-Abdullah political activists near *Hazratbal* shrine, in the northern outskirts of Srinagar, in which, as the first information report lodged by Saifuddin Makhdoomi, Tehsil

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President of the ruling National Conference (NC), alleged that Mohiuddin Banday, the domestic servant of Bakhshi's brother, Bakhshi Abdul Hameed, was stabbed to death and the venue of the NC rally was attacked and ransacked by supporters of Sheikh Abdullah. The case was therefore called *Hazratbal Murder Case* and all these sections were applied against the accused.

Short of committing rape, I believe, almost all the sections applied on hardcore criminals were also used against all of us.

Among my prominent jail-mates were included Maulana Mohammad Sayed Masoodi, Sofi Mohammad Akbar, Ghulam Qadir Sher-e-Ganderbal, Ali Mohammad Bhat of Gaw Kadal, Sayed Ahmad Syed Narabali, Molvi Abdul Hameed Vakil of Shopian, Ali Mohamamd Naik, Mohiuddin Sofi of Ganderbal, Hissamuddin Banday, Pir Maqbool Velgami, Pir Mohammad Yusuf Makhdoomi, Mohiudin Shah, Mohammad Khalil Jauhar, Hafizullah Makhdoomi, Dr Abdul Majeed of Anantnag, Mirza Ghulam Qadir Beig, Mirza Mohammad Yaqub Beig, Mirza Ghulam Mohammad Beig Zaildar, Ghulam Rasool Karra of Batamaloo and many more.

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The farcical trial was conducted in camera.

None of us expected any justice at the hands of prosecutors and, sarcastically, the term *no vakeel, no daleel, no appeal* was coined and raised as a daily slogan at the beginning of the drama every morning right in the premises of the Jail where a portion of an abandoned small building had been turned into court room.

My political mentor, Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, did send some of his lawyer colleagues to take up my defense but it was of no use because the manipulated case was not to be fought on legal or constitutional grounds. It was a political act based on political enmity and was supposed to be officially dragged on and prolonged in one way or the other without adhering to legalities or even moral obligations. These friends included D P Dhar, former state home minister, Ghulam Rasool Renzu, former speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Girdhari Lal Dogra, former finance minister in the Sadiq government. After witnessing the farce of the trial, they had no way out but to abandon their futile exercise. It was the same Sadiq Sahib, who became the state chief minister in 1964 and in

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the first instance, withdrew this case calling it "a blot on the face of democracy."

This incarceration somehow proved for me a blessing in disguise.

I learnt Persian language in prison. I had the opportunity of thoroughly reading eminent 'prison writers' like Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Nazim Hikmat, Julius Fucik, Faiz Ahmad Faiz and many others. In jail, one preferably likes to read those writers who have themselves experienced detention on political grounds. This proves quite useful for a comparative study of what happened to them and how they felt about their own prison life.

The prison poetry of Nazim Hikmat and Faiz Ahmad Faiz impressed me most. The *Notes from Gallows* by Fucik also was there in my favourite readings.

Faiz, indeed, was very inspiring. His several poems written in different Pakistani jails for more than four years from 1951 spoke of in depth feelings and experiences of chained thoughts, shackled sentiments and fettered ideas. However, his strong optimism about brighter life and a shining tomorrow never faded away though he

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was implicated in a so-called conspiracy against the State which would drag him even to gallows.

I take pleasure in reproducing excerpts from his two prison poems titled *Nisaar main teri galiyoon pa* (Dedicated to your alleyways), and, *Aiy dil-e-betaab thehar* (Hold on O! restless heart):

I am dedicated to your alleyways, O my motherland,
Where it's customary now
That nobody may walk about, head held high.
If any one dare step out, he must do so
Furtive fear of body and soul.
All your devotees must now
Withstand a new law, a new order-
Stones and bricks enchained, but dogs out at large.

And a few lines from *Aiy dil-e-betaab thehar:*

Hot blood of night
Let it gush forth still more-after all,
This very darkness powders the dawn's cheeks.
It will soon be day
Hold on restless heart.

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The chains still clank behind the screen of music,
The package of goods and chattel
Still holds its inexorable sway.
In the red wine, even the tears get intermingled;
There's still in the staggering feet
The gesture of tamed greeting.
Let the frenzy of your lovers swell ever so high
Let your taverns for once be real.
Soon will the supremacy of goods and chattel be over
And also the heavy burden of cares,
Even if chains keep on clanking forever.

Going through the works of Nehru like *Glimpses of World History* (1934), *An Autobiography* (1936) and *Discovery of India* (1946), actually all written in prison, and Maulana Azad's *Ghubaar-e-Khaatr,* provided me with an absorbing pass time where I delved deep into the glorious past and rich heritage of India.

One of the finest pieces of Nehru, he ever wrote briefly in prison, is on Kashmir, the land of his ancestors. He has given the poetic description of

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abounding beauties of Kashmir, in the words of Josef Korbel, "with lyrical nostalgia." Nehru's painting of Kashmir colours is, perhaps, unsurpassed in the contemporary Indian writing.

This excerpt which I am reproducing here may not be in tune with the topic I am dealing with, but it is again the kind of nostalgia, because I am myself a Kashmiri.

Nehru illustrates enchanting beauties and enthralling colours of the *Paradise of Earth* in this beautiful poetic diction:

"...Like some supremely beautiful woman, whose beauty is almost impersonal and above human desire, such was Kashmir in all its feminine beauty of river and valley and lake and graceful trees. And then another aspect of this magic beauty would come to view, a masculine one, of hard mountains and precipices, and snow-capped peaks and glaciers, and cruel and fierce torrents rushing down to the valleys below. It had a hundred faces and innumerable aspects, ever-chanting, sometimes smiling, sometimes sad and full of sorrow. The mist would creep up from the *Dal* Lake and, like a transparent veil, give glimpses of what was behind. The clouds

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would throw out their arms to embrace a mountain top, or creep down stealthily like children at play. I watched this ever-changing spectacle, and sometimes the sheer loveliness of it was overpowering and I felt almost faint. I gazed at it, it seemed to me dreamlike and unreal, like the hopes and desires that fill us and so seldom find fulfillment. It was like the face of a beloved that one sees in a dream and that fades away on awakening..."

It was in the same prison that I translated into Kashmiri verse the Persian quatrains of Omar Khayyam. This translation was published in a book form in 1963 and became an instant popular poetry book in Kashmir after Maqbool Kralwari's famous *Gulrez*.

I also wrote a number of prison poems which were collected and brought out also in a book titled *Zanjoori Hund Saaz* again in the year 1963.

This collection of Kashmiri poetry carried, as its preface, excerpts from the speech of a former Indian President and great philosopher Dr S Radhakrishnan, which he had delivered at

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the inaugural ceremony of the *Sahitya Akademi* In New Delhi on 12 March 1954.

He was kind enough to give me the written permission to use this excerpt.

I reproduce here some brief portions of Dr Radhakrishnan wherein he had said about freedom of expression of the man and the society:

"When we aim at a Welfare State and expect the state to provide all things, we must see to it, in the interest of our social health and vitality, that the individual does not lose the freedom to conform or not conform, to do, undo, or misdo so long as he does not interfere with the equal freedom of others, and does not cross the limits of decency. Society is becoming more and more regimented.

"We have a fear of freedom. When our activities are regulated, imagination which rests in solitude cannot thrive. Unless the individual has the courage to be lonely in his mind, free in his thought, he is not capable of great writing. Great literature, like true religion, is what a man does with his solitariness, to use Whitehead's phrase."

This collection of prison poetry is dedicated to great Kashmiri scholar-politician, late Maulana

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Mohammad Sayed Masoodi, who taught me Persian language in prison, provided me with many useful books to read and, above all, extended continued moral support to a detenue like me who was in utter despair after being forced to undergo this frightful experience when he was hardly a 19-year old boy.

The book *Zanjoori Hund Saaz* contains a 13-page introduction depicting the suffocation, agonies and even dreamlike short-lived joys of life in jail.

Some poems in this collection are deeply influenced by Faiz and Nazim Hikmat. There is also a derivation from a poem by Thomas Hardy. In my another poem, *The Poet and the Shama* (The Candle), the torturous surroundings with suppressed whispers are illustrated at length. I present here only one stanza from this lengthy composition:

Silence has sealed all music,
And hushed lies every voice,
But for the owl's hoots,
That assails my ears from every side,
Time moves with tired feet,
Dusk has not changed to night,

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And wild despair grips one's soul,
For, dawn seems far away.

The Central jail in Srinagar is situated on the shores of Dal Lake on one side, and on the foothills of the Mughal Fort on the other, on which the Hindu temple of *Sharika Devi* and the Muslim shrine of Hazrat Makhdoom Sahib are also located. This type of a mystical atmosphere around the prison creates a sensational reaction in the mind of the poet-prisoner particularly when spring comes and chirping and singing of birds coming from nearby almond gardens is luring him to an unknown world of ecstasy and forgetfulness.

In jail, it is never today, it is always tomorrow. All the hopes are pinned to and dreams are woven around tomorrow, which sometimes turns most unpredictable or very pleasant. The Czech writer, Julius Fucik, executed by Nazis in a Prague prison in 1943, describes the unforeseen sorrows and joys of the day which comes after today. In his *Notes from Gallows*, he writes, "Though we're all alive here, next year, next month, today and tomorrow, our eyes are always looking towards future because future carries hopes.

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Somebody's fate has been decided and he is to be sent to gallows the day after tomorrow, but in tomorrow, all his glowing hopes are hidden. Live till tomorrow; perhaps, everything might change. The events are running fast. What will happen tomorrow, no one knows. Tomorrows of the future pass by. Thousands lay down their lives and for them tomorrow never appears. But those who are still alive, they live on this hope. No one knows what is going to happen tomorrow?"

And Nazim Hikmat says:

In prison,
I've fallen in love,
With my own dreams.

These are the dreams of tomorrow; some of them, even if horrifying, result in something that is delightful and some of them, even if sweet, do not come true and turn out as dreadful.

The routine life spent with inmates in the sprawling premises of the Central Jail was less normal and more abnormal. One would frequently come across very novel experiences almost every day.

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Uncalled for quarreling with the police guards, petty matters turning into abuses and selective invectives and changing of mental aptitude within no time would leave many others in a state of shock and surprise. The detenues belonged to various political ideologies. Their differences of opinion on political thinking, performing of religious rites in different ways and brawls on the distribution of festive dishes sent by unknown friends on occasions of *Eid* and other Islamic holidays, had become the order of the day.

At the same time, there was some light peeping into our dark barracks from the adjoining compartments where Maulana Masoodi was imparting the teachings of the *Holy Quran* to a Hindu detenue Kashyap Bandhu, and *Bhagwad Gita* was being taught by Bandhu ji to a Muslim Molvi.

Of my own experiences, I can say, that a criminal or a political prisoner, every one behind the bars is bound to adopt an independent attitude towards whatever comes to him. He has to create his own world which is devoid of any anxiety of what was happening to his kith and kin back in his home. To establish this world in isolation the

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prisoner has to calmly accept mental agonies, psychological strains and suppression of aspirations to evolve an adaptability which keeps his spirits high, if not accelerated. On occasions, he is harsh also with his own self and does not tolerate even pleasant things taking place around but, in the process, he widens his canvas of tolerance and becomes habitual of every thing, whether it is good or bad. This finally bestows upon his thinking an unspeakable comfort of mind and contentment of thought.

In the beginning, the food served to us was a small bowl of half-cooked rice, water-like *daal* and a microscopic piece of mutton given only once a week at dinner on Saturdays. Gradually, dishes prepared by home people and relatives of the detenues were also allowed to be brought in though the lion's' share would always be devoured by the jail warden and his junior colleagues. The daily expenditure on our meals for 24 hours was fourteen *aanas*. It was after about eight months when for some of the senior political prisoners and young intellectuals like me, daily food expenses were enhanced to two-and- a-half rupees per day and we were also

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shifted to a special class independent accommodation with one room allotted to two inmates. This small amount of money at that time would conveniently buy us all the required eatables including mutton, bread, eggs and even butter. We began to cook our own meals and enjoyed this pass time immensely.

When you are at liberty to have complete control of the kitchen, you invariably go for different experiments in cooking. This helped me most, and today, I can claim and you must believe it, that I am a very good cook and can prepare at least two dozen vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes catering to varied tastes.

Despite granting special class treatment to a few of us, brining in of tobacco or cigarettes into jail premises was totally banned. Some of the detenues would manage tobacco for their concealed *chillum* by means of greasing the palm of the guards but, for me it was a novel experience.

After some of us were shifted to this new accommodation near the western boundaries of then prison, A Sikh officer from the Punjab Police came very close to me. He was a lover of poetry

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and would sit with me for hours together talking about Punjabi and Urdu poetry. He remembered hundreds of beautiful Urdu couplets which he would recite before me in the traditional tune of *Heer Waris Shah* giving it a colourful blend of Lahore and Lucknow. When he knew about my bad habit of chain smoking, he saw to it that he got me one packet of Star brand cigarettes every day without any fail.

He was a Sikh. It was forbidden for him even to touch the tobacco. But he meant it that a poet-prisoner did not suffer from the agony of mental discomfort. For my sake, he overstepped his religious brief and made me feel happy.

I can never forget that great man

In this chapter, I have written only about those leading writers and poets who made considerable contribution in the fields of poetics and other species of literature during one decade of progressive literary movement. Also, some more writers could not be provided space here due to the prescribed format of this work. This, however, does not demerit their value of contribution they made to strengthen this movement in Kashmir.

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Before concluding this chapter, it will be an injustice done to Abdul Ahad Azad if he is not eulogised genuinely. In my view though Azad lived a life in penury as a petty school teacher, but his zeal and zest took him out all across Kashmir Valley to collect lives and works of hundreds of Kashmiri poets which he compiled, that too for the first time, in a three- volume history of Kashmiri language and poetry. This comprehensive work is a basic source material for researchers today and the entire Kashmiri nation should be extremely grateful to this poor but dedicated intellectual son of the soil for preserving almost all that what would not be with us today under any circumstances.

In his life, Azad was very close to Prem Nath Bazaz, a local historian and politician, who swayed him away from the Progressive Writers' Conference, though one of the founders of the Conference, Prem Nath Pardesi, a renowned Urdu and Kashmiri fiction writer, persuaded him to join the Conference where his presence was much needed to guide the new entrants into the fold of the movement. But Bazaz never permitted him to express openly what Azad was

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holding very dear to his belief in progressive writers' movement. He however did not hide his ideology and wrote memorable poems on *Marxism, Russian Revolution, the Plight of a Farmer, Mahatma Gandhi* and many similar topics.

During his last days of life, Azad was struggling hard for the revival of his deteriorating health but the destiny was against him and he did not overcome even a common ailment of appendicitis. The treatment given to him in the Saddar Hospital in Srinagar was quite satisfactory in accordance with the facilities and equipment available to the doctors in the hospital. Azad breathed his last on 04 April 1948. Mahjoor wrote this elegy in Persian on this tragic event:

Aah Azad az jahaan ropoash shud,
Ya ki az jaam-e-baqa madhoash shud;
Bahr-e-haal-e-rehlatash Mahjoor guft:
Bulbul-e-Shireen bayaan khamoash shud

(Alas! Azad hid his face from the world,
Or, he got intoxicated after drinking from the cup of eternity;
For memorising his demise, Mahjoor said:

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The singing nightingale opted for eternal silence)

Still, Bazaz tried to earn a political mileage out of Azad's disease, accusing the government of turning Nelson's eye on this great writer of Kashmir when he was undergoing treatment. This, somehow, did not cut any nice for, the doctors treating him said clearly that it was some post-operative complication which developed fast and could not save the Poet.

Azad's chief confident and close friend, Dr Padam Nath Ganjoo sums up his poet friend's aptitude of a modern mind of progressive outlook and life borne ideals. In the foreword of *Kulliyaat-e-Azad*, Ganjoo writes of this book compiled by him, "A little before breaking out of the World War II, the rays of political conscience in the country had begun to shine and the reasons of slavery of centuries had also begun to become clear. The gruesome events of the oppressor and the oppressed, the land owner and the farmer and debtor and a money lender, were facing Azad on each and every turn. On one side, he was watching the life of luxurious people and on the other, unbearable miseries and difficulties

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of the poor. His watchful eyes, sensitive self and active mind were enough to understand these differences in the society. Under such circumstances, a sensitive person shall take up a sword in his hands to eliminate forces of evil and barbarism. Azad did not have any sword but a pen held in his hands.

"During the last decade of his short life, Azad wrote mostly patriotic poems and *ghazals* and applied warmth to the hearts of Kahmiri youths. He addressed flying clouds, melting snow, jungle trees, water falls, the flowers and the nightingale, and disseminated the philosophy and message of humanism, revolution, ego, love, affection, humility and freedom."

By all means, Azad was first conscious writer and the last, and also an unending chapter of the progressive literary movement in Kashmir.

Even today, some friends belonging to the literary and cultural fraternity of Kashmir somehow speak, rather clandestinely, that the progressive literary movement in Kashmir did not contribute much to the Kashmiri poetry and other literary genres.

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These ignorant colleagues are probably not in a clear position to answer this question convincingly:

After the end of the active progressive movement, has Kashmir produced, during the last about six decades, any Nadim, Kamil, Rahi, Firaq or Khayal? The truthful answer shall be obviously in negative.

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CHAPTER FIVE
Progressivism in Kashmiri Sufi poetry

The richest treasure of several hundred year old Kashmiri poetry is the *Sufi* poetry which is abounding in the immortal human ideals of love for all, universal brotherhood, nobility of human values, dignity of man, the best creation of God, and search for truth not in mosques and temples, but within one's own self.

Some times one wonders as to how these Sufi poets, many of whom were totally illiterate and doing menial jobs of black smiths, masons, ordinary labourers and daily wagers, created highly acclaimed poetry of universal characteristics.

This spiritual factor overwhelming their soul and making them poets of popularity has been obviously a gift of *Ilhaam* from Above,

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and not the result of any laboured effort. This benediction of inspiration gave them a matchless communicative talent to reach out to their readers and listeners because most of their songs and poems were made public after being sung by popular local singers.

The element of progressivism in our poetry has been there right from the beginning when the first Kashmiri poetess Lalla Arifa (1325-1422) disseminated her ideology of not worshipping idols which in her words were nothing but motionless and lifeless stones:

A temple and an idol are but stone,
O learned Pandit, what do you adore?
And all, from head to foot are of the one
Same stuff, for worship is required no more
Than vital airs brought to the will alone.

In the words of Rahman Rahi, "When Lalla became conscious about her surroundings, she also had to face almost similar situation and circumstances that poor people were exploited by the rich. During Lalla's period of time, Shahmiri dynasty ruled Kashmir. The political power had been snatched from the hands of those Hindu rulers who were supported by the Brahmin

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class. This resulted in the people having doubts about this type of social structure. The grip of caste-ridden society and other social bonds started breaking into fragments. The greatest contribution of Lalla's poetry is the reflection of this changed social concept projected in her *vaakhs*, which was gradually overtaking the old traditions, superstitions and stereotyped beliefs."

Lalla says;

I saw a wise man starving of hunger,
As if autumn leaves were falling from trees.
Then I saw a stupid beating up his cook,
Since then, I, lalla, am waiting to renounce this world.

Rahi elaborates on Lalla's desire to renouncing the world, saying, "In the last stanza of this *vaakh* the poetess expresses her deep anguish. While feeling the social injustice was unbearable for her, she preferred to bid good bye to the world. This thought also came to her mind like a flash because at that time there were no social forces to fight out miseries of the suppressed common man."

Lalla Arifa the first Kashmiri poetess spoke of this injustice and discrimination against poor

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and downtrodden sections by upper caste Brahmins whom she called worshippers of "lifeless stone idols" which could not give anything to a human being for, every man and woman was to find God within his or her own self.

Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani (1376-1438), the junior contemporary of Lalla, also spoke of human values and overcoming the worldly desires including the pleasures of life. He however taught us that life is the dearest graciousness almighty has ever given to a human being and he should spend it in all humility, sublimity and with utmost affection for one and all. He was a profound teacher of communal harmony and class less brotherhood:

No wonder born of the same father and mother,

We bear no ill-will to each other

Should our love bind us all alike, Hindu an Musalman,

Then surely God is pleased with us

Sheikh-ul-Aalam was an embodiment of love which gives fresh life even to a dying man.

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He describes essence of love in his great poetic excellence:

Pierced by the darts from their beloveds' eyelashes,
Lovers shed tears like pearls.
True lovers die before their death;
And men of faith come to the infinite;
Seeing their beloved, like flowers they bloom.

Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani had apparently abandoned luxurious life though not believing in pessimism or escapism but he tried to educate his people that bodily desires don't take a human being anywhere and finally he dies the death of a common man. On the contrary, if a person is absorbed in noble deeds like preaching communal harmony, brotherhood, control over worldly aspirations and his concern for environment, he is a real human being first and then a good Muslim.

He carried forward the mission of Lalla and there are almost identical verses from both these preachers of human dignity that one wonders as to how these poems could be differentiated from each other, more so, because

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the philosophy of both these founders of Kashmiri literature is so resembling that it sometimes makes a reader think that this poetry is the outcome of one poet and not more than that. Sheikh says;

Whosoever realises his own true Self
Uncovers the vessels of wine,
Overflows with joy, is intoxicated,
And forgets his lower self;
He will not know a Hindu
From a Musalman.

And:

I abandoned myself completely to love;
And God is pleased with me.
Be steadfast in love and I will give thee
A taste of wine which fills the river of Life
That brought us hither;
From whose water God hath made every living thing.
Some drank cup after cup unceasingly;
Some, in the act of drinking, attained the goal;
Some have despaired, while some still have hope.

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Habibullah Nowshehri (1555-1617), commonly known as Hubbi, was an ascetic poet who would always sing of love calling this world abode of love. One day, he was so absorbed with reciting holy Quran in his shop of grocery that customers took away rock salt from the shop and placed stones on the scale in a barter system. He never knew as to who had done this mischief.

Nowshehri passed away in 1617. His grave was soon turned into a Muslim shrine which is situated in Nowshehra locality in the north of Srinagar city. Hubbi wrote in Arabic, Persian and Kashmiri. His Kashmiri lyrics which are available in very less numbers are usually sung by Kashmiri classical singers.

In one of his compositions, Hubbi says:

What separates religion? Tell, O heart,
When faith is one in all, in all the same,
Why one is classed as infidel, apart,
Another called a Muslim, though the name
Is all that differs, God to those is guide
Who followed him, who in their lives obeyed,
To others, he himself the path denied.
Diversity of faiths and quarrelling of creeds

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And not from Him, the Lord of Lords, in whom
Nor faith nor creed nor irreligion leads
To doubt or dogma and for none is room.
Yet he alone will know what these words mean,
Habib, who has known God and God has seen.

Wahab Khar (1842-1912) of Khrew Shaar village in Kashmir is one of the popular Sufi poets who composed several poems on varied aspects of love, humanity and life which enthralls even the dancing angels. All these are written in a simple diction making them very close to the folk songs.

By profession a black smith, Wahab had a number of disciples to whom he imparted basics of mysticism and he became so reverend that his grave in *Wastoori wan* in Khrew has become a place of obeisance for his lovers and followers.

It is said that Raja Amar Singh, the then ruler of Kashmir, had great respect for this saint poet. He once sent a horse to him for his ride along with a sum of three hundred rupees, but

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the poet refused to accept it and returned them back to the ruler.

His lengthy poem *Tota* narrates the tale, with all emotions, of the faithfulness of a parrot towards his master. He says:

Love said: I shall create by my own hand
My own beloved and the Table came and Pen,
O, joy! I wrote by God's command,
And there was Sheikh Sana
Who on the name of Rama told the zikr of his beads?
And loved an Indian girl, confused the creeds,
And worshipped the idols, caring not for blame,
"I am the truth," Mansoor said and could find
His love within the shrine of his own mind,
A secret which is difficult to tell,
And since, I, too, have tried to glance
Upon the secrets of man's being,
I kneel, and lo! The angels have begun to dance.

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Ahmad Batwari (1845- 1918) was comparatively a very significant poet in the cult of Kashmiri Sufi poets. Unfortunately, most of his poetic writings disappeared with the passage of time, but whatever is left of him, is the example of worthy creative literature which also enlists Batwari amongst those towering Sufi writers who believed in one God but also cherished the unity of thought and action between communities and people belonging to different faiths and religious conceptions.

Batwari listens and enjoys musical ensembles in the court of *Inder* where the preaching of a Muslim theist, Mansoor Al-Hallaj is put to music and sung. Mansoor declared "*Anal Haq*," I am the Truth, and was crucified by his fundamentalist opponents.

Listen to this enthralling couplet of Batwari:

In the court of Raja Inder,
Fairies are singing and dancing
There, I heard the music of Mansoor
I wanted to drink the cup of this ecstasy,
But my consciousness failed to help me.

Also:

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Mansoor gave away his life.
But treated Hindus and the Muslims alike.
He said Anal which is not a sin,
But the sin is to hide the Truth.

In fact, we have a very small number of Sufi poets who were progressive in their approach to life but most of them chose to be virtually one with God abandoning all worldly aspirations and desires.

Here is a small poem by a lesser known poet, Aziz Darvesh, on the universal concept of religious amity. He says:

O hear, the soul disturbing song
Of spirits singing as the tempest blows,
While waiting by the endless ocean's sands
A hapless throng
Of blinds and helpless in the undertows
Weep and wring their hands,
O, hear the song!
And in the storm I see the countless boats
The wind has set adrift, one sinks, one floats,
And I among them, tossed
On unknown depths, a stranger here and lost,
O, lead me on!

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I made of mine own self a bridge and crossed
To that far shore beyond, and saw above,
And in a brighter dawn,
No Hindu and no Musalman are there!
The secret, to his fellowmen, of love,
Division gone,
Aziz proclaims, and prays a common prayer.
From saints and sages, "All are one", he learned,
And so Aziz, the mad, the truth discerned.

In fact, besides a number of Kashmiri Sufi poets having accepted progressivism as the basic reality of life, the beginning of Kashmiri poetry in 14th century was a strong dissemination of this philosophy which denounced the prevailing practice of caste and creed, class bound society and upper hand of illiterate brutes over the educated and emancipated class across Kashmir Valley.

●

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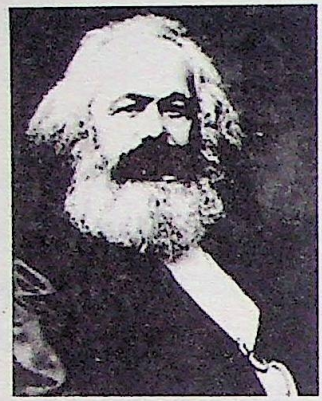
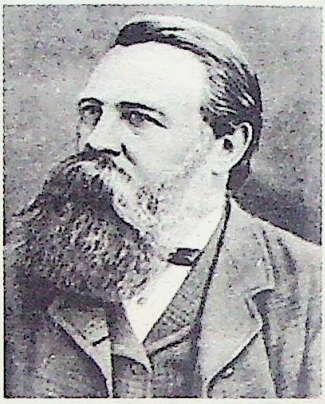
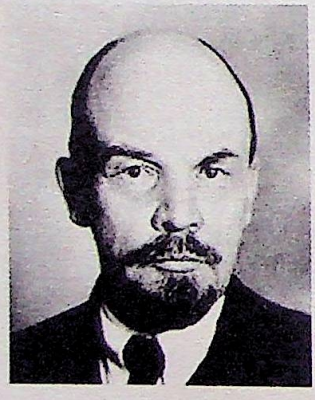


Karl Marx



Frederich Angeles



Viladimir Lenin

Mao Tse Tung

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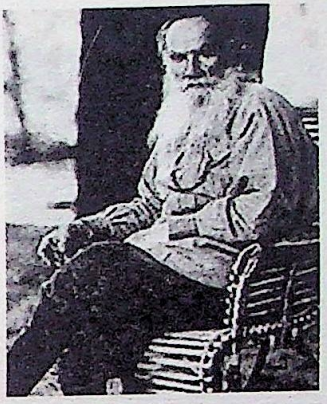
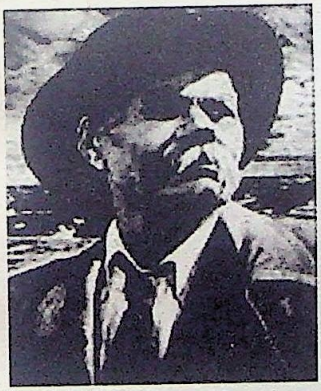
Joseph Stalin



Leo Tolstoy



Maxim Gorky

Mayakovsky

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Julius Fucik

Alexander Pushkin

Anton Chekhov

Nikolai Gogol

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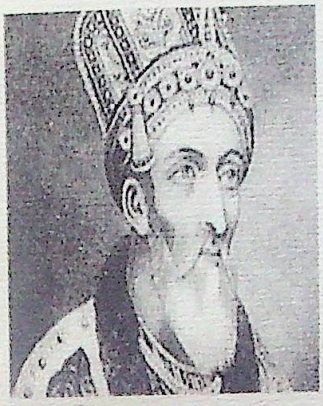

Bahadur Shah Zafar

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

Mirza Ghalib

Barkatullah Bhopali

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Gulab Singh

Ranbir Singh

Pratap Singh

Hari Singh

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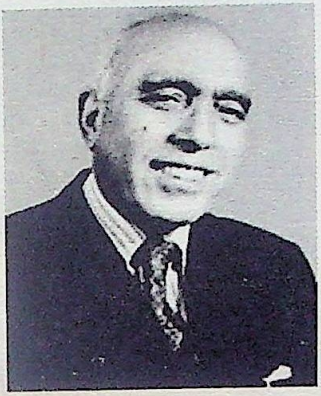
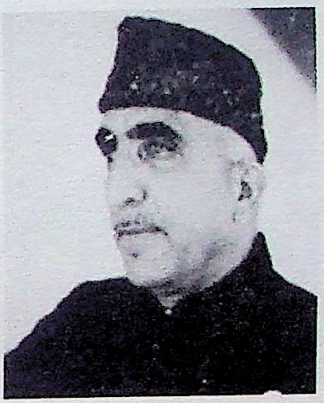


Sheikh Abdullah



Bakhshi Gh. Mohammad

G M Sadiq

Maulana Masoodi

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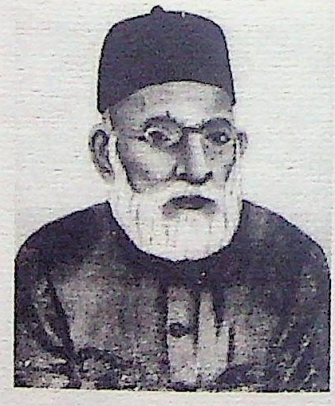
Ghulam Rasool Renzu

Prem Nath Pardesi

D P Dhar



Hasrat Mohani

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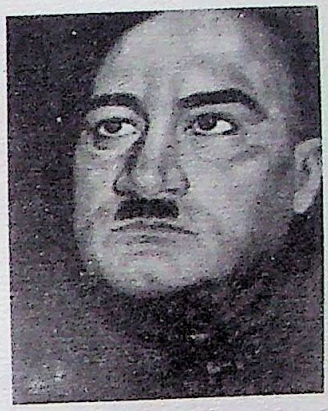
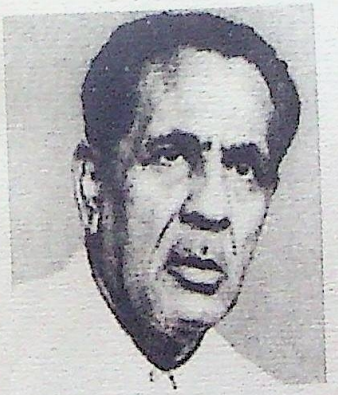
Sarojini Naidu



Josh Malihabadi



Firaq Gorakhpuri

Ismat Chughtai

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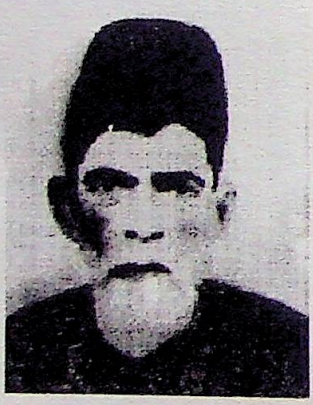
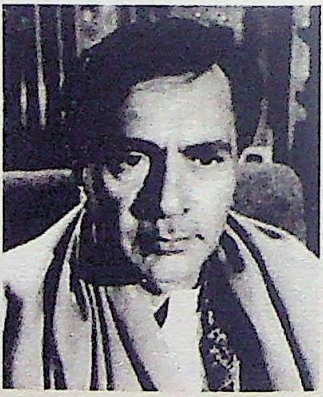
Munshi Prem Chand

Rajinder Singh Bedi



Akbar Allahabadi



Balraj Sahni

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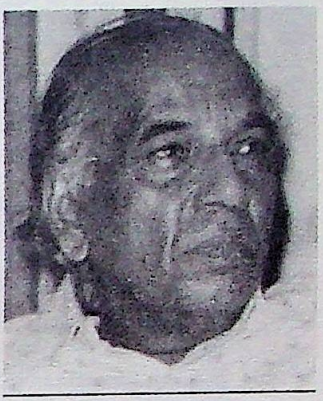
Sir George Grierson



Ali Jawad Zaidi

Prithvinath Pushp

Aale Ahmad Saroor

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Faiz Ahmad Faiz

Speak, Speak, your lips are free.
Speak; it is your own tongue.
Speak; it is your own body.
Speak; your life is still yours.
See how in the blacksmith's shop
The flame burns wild,
The iron glows red;
The locks open their jaws,
And every chain begins to break.
Speak; this brief hour is long enough
Before the death of body and tongue
Speak, because the truth is not dead yet,
Speak, speak, whatever you must speak.

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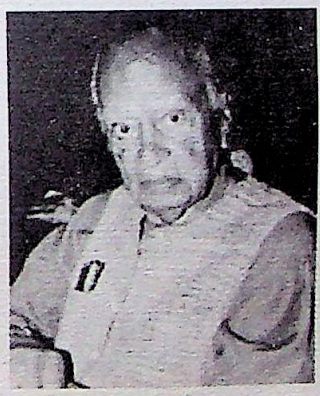
Syed Sajjad Zaheer

Kazi Nazrul Islam

Nazim Hikmat



Mulk Raj Anand

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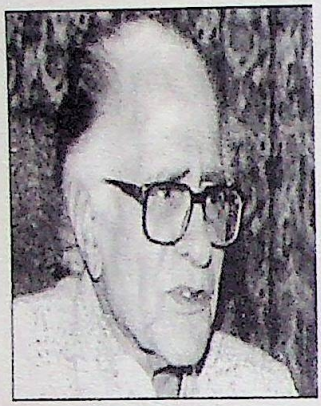
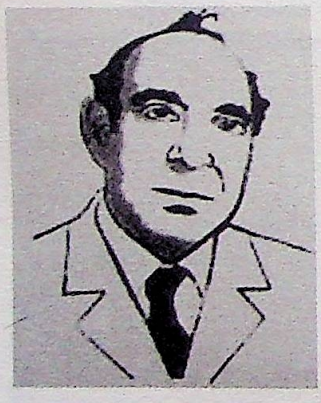
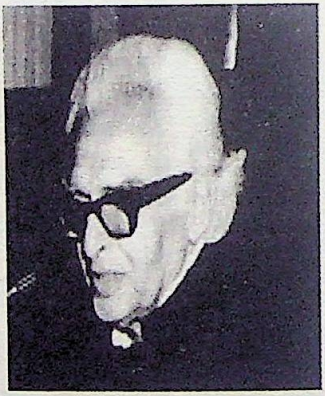


Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi

Sadat Hassan Mantoo



Krishan Chander



Ghulam Rabbani Tabaan

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Asrarul Haq Majaz

Majrooh Sultanpuri

Makhdoom Mohiuddin

Khwaja Ahmad Abbas

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Kaifi Azmi

Sahir Ludhianvi

Habib Jalib

Zaheer Kashmiri

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Mohammad Din Taseer

Ali Sradar Jafri

Ahmad Faraz

Akhtarul Iman

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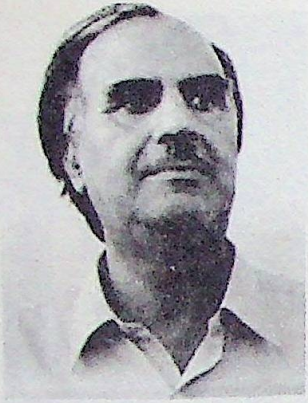

Dina Nath Nadim

Akhtar Mohiuddin

Ghulan Nabi Firaq

Amin Kamil

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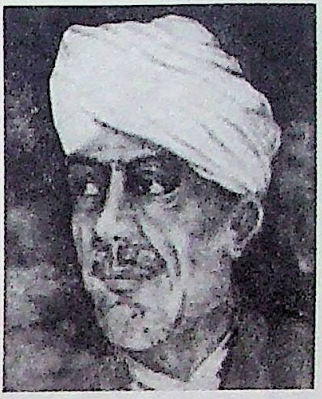
Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor



Abdul Ahad Azad

Mirza Arif

Rahman Rahi

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Abdul Sattar Aasi

Noor Mohammad Roshan

Dina Nath Almast

Taj Begum Renzu

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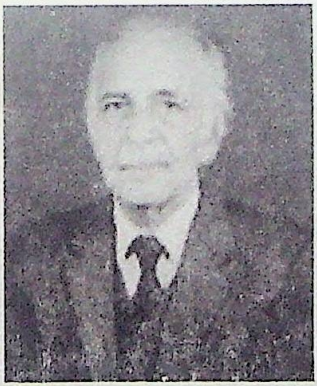
Ali Mohammad Lone

Habib Kmaran



Somnath Zutshi

Vasudev Reh

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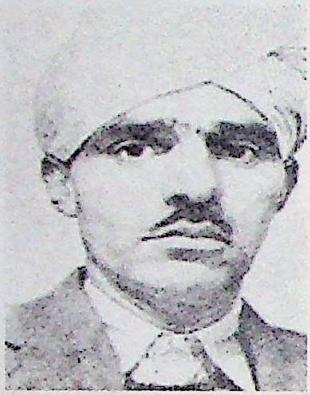

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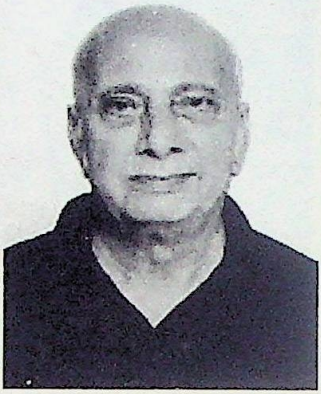
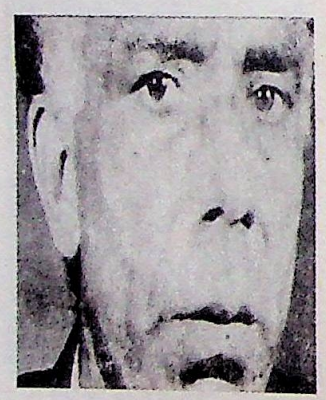
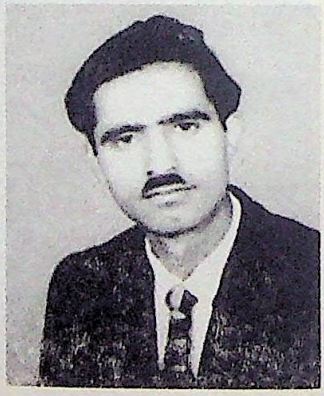


Pran Kishore



Aziz Haroon



Autar Kishen Rahbar

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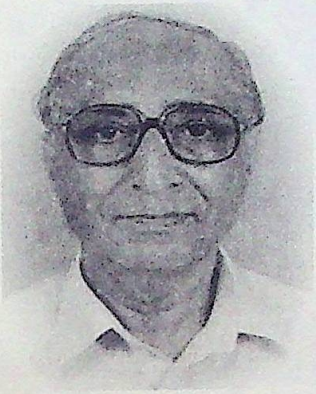

T N Dhar Kundan

Ghulam Rasool Santosh

Muzaffar Azim

Bansi Nirdosh

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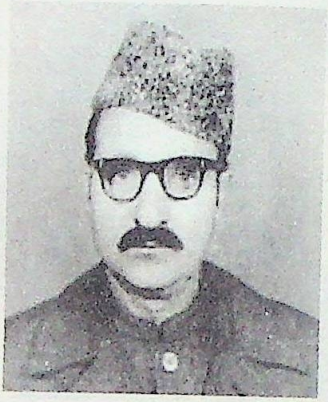
Arjun Dev Majboor



Abdul Sattar Ranjoor

Chaman Lal Chaman

Makhanlal Bekas

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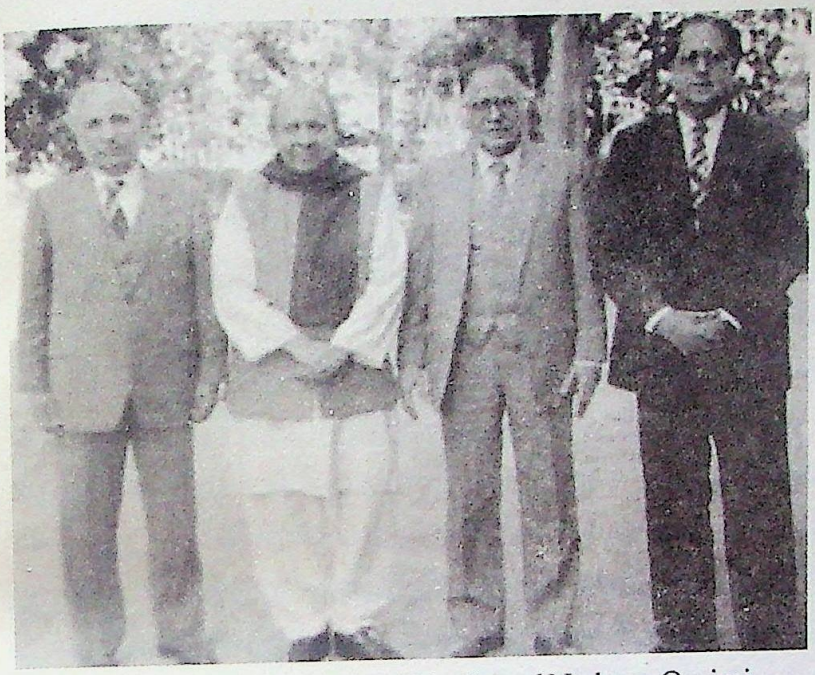

Kaleem Akhtar, Qateel Shifai, Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi and Ghulam Nabi Khayal -Lahore 1990

Bhisham Sahni, Kaifi Azmi and Ghulam Nabi Khayal on the occasion of receiving Sahitya Akademi award for 1975 at New Delhi

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CHAPTER SIX
New genres and periodicals

With the fast growing popularity of progressive writers movement in Kashmir, many new genres and species were for the first time introduced in our literary world. From 14th century onwards, our literature had been rallying around only various species of poetry including Lalla Arifa's *Vaakh* (Vakyani), Sheikh Noorani's *Shruk* (Ashloks), Habba Khatoon's *Watchan*, Mahmood Gami's voluminous *mathnavis*, mostly renderings and adaptation of mythological tales and love stories from ancient Arabia and Persia, *ghazals* and poems, Rasool Mir's sweet romantic lyrics and the like. But there was not a single piece of literary prose found in Kashmiri language till the progressive movement spread its wings far and wide across the Valley of Kashmir.

It was somehow during a short period of this historical literary revolution in the language that

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new genres, species and other experiments other than poetry were conducted and it was also for the first time that the first monthly journal in Kashmiri, *Kong Posh*, The Saffron Flower, organ of the Conference, was started in 1950.

The chief patron of the Progressive Writers movement, G M Sadiq, writes in its inaugural issue,

"The publication of *Kong Posh* in Kashmiri language is of a historical significance. This significance is very much there because the language which stood suppressed till date has the honour of having its own magazine for the first time to represent the people's culture as its genuine representative.

"Today, the American and British imperialism are bent upon enslaving us through Pakistan and are at their conspiracy to turn our land into an army base. *Kong Posh* and its contributors are very much conscious about this fact. Till this danger is gone and until the people of Kashmir are not given freedom to decide about their future the cultural life of Kashmiri people will remain endangered under this external threat."

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This issue of *Kong Posh* carries the first ever serious drama written in Kashmiri by a leading progressive writer, Prem Nath Pardesi. The drama titled *Quda Gojwari* is the story of a local Muslim, Abdul Qudoos Gojwari, who gives shelter in his home to the wife and daughter- in-law of local Kashmiri Pandit rebellion who had risen against the ruthless Pathan Governor of Kashmir, Buland Khan. Gojwari prefers a painful death for himself on his handing over a fugitive Pandit family to a tyrant ruler.

Mahjoor has paid his tribute to Gojwari in this couplet emphasising on the people of Kashmir to maintain this traditional communal harmony:

Kor batas peth zu fida Quda Gojwaary
Az timay kathe yaad paaviv paan waany

(Quda Gojwari sacrificed his life for the safety of a Kashmiri Hindu family,
Today, recall and remember such instances of communal amity)

At that time, Abdul Sattar Aasi had passed away. Mahjoor also wrote a befitting obituary for him in *Kong Posh.*

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Along with *Kong Posh*, another monthly, a multilingual one, *Gulrez,* ran along with it contemporarily. Whereas *Kong Posh* provided space on its pages for new experiments in Kashmiri literature and it was then for the first time after 14th century that literary prose was introduced in this 5,000 year old language to which a number of progressive writers, switching from Urdu to Kashmiri, their own mother tongue, contributed with replete literary writings for the Kashmiri reader and opened up new avenues of modern literature, *Gulrez* mainly dedicated its space to those writers who had nothing to do with the progressive literary movement and criticised this new chapter negatively. The main contributors to *Gulrez* included Maulana Hairat Pandani, Syed Shamsuddin Ghamgeen, Ghulam Rasool Nazki, Mohiuddin Hajini, Abdul Haq Burq, Mirza Arif, Dr Aziz Ahmed Qureshi and the like. Sometimes this magazine, brought out to counter *Kong Posh,* carried fantastic and laughable stories of the writer's spiritual powers by Dr Qureshi who always wrote about his dreams wherein he was bestowed with divine revelations from Moses

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and Jesus whom, as he claimed, met him in person in these dreams, rather hallucinations, and spoke to them for hours. Dr Qureshi was never taken seriously either by reactionaries or by progressives, though he unmindfully continued penning down his fantasies and finally converted these articles into a full fledged book titled *Asraar-e-Kasheer* (The Mysteries of Kashmir). *Gulrez* also met the same fate of *Kong Posh* and was closed down in August 1955.

In 1960, when Mirza Arif was the director of State sericulture department, he contacted me and expressed his desire to revive the publication of *Gulrez* under my editorship. Being a government servant Arif could not associate his name with any periodical or newspaper. It was however a lighter joke enjoyed by me when he suggested to me that the name of his son, Mirza Habibul Hassan, be included in the journal as its associate editor. I agreed because readers knew well as to who was doing the job of editing and preparing the monthly. Even after this second round of *Gulrez* came to a sudden finish, I had never seen the face of my associate editor.

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The founder of *Gulrez,* Mirza Arif had earlier composed some nice poetry depicting the plight of lower class of the society. His most pathetic poem *Dussa* (The Pashmina Shawl) is a fine example of Arif's progressive poetry. But finally he landed in the lap of reactionaries and made his journal a mouthpiece of so called mysticism and escapist tendencies overpowering the bright aspects of human life.

After *Kong Posh* and *Gulrez,* there was a vacuum of more than a decade that Kashmiri language had no periodical before the State Cultural Academy started publication of its journal *Shreeza* in Kashmiri along with other languages and dialects recognised by the State Constitution. Some more magazines in Kashmiri were brought out rather irregularly and also wound up their show within a very short span of time for want of financial facilities and the lack of readership.

The complete file of *Kong Posh* is not available now, but one can state with all responsibility, had *Kong Posh* not been there in existence even though only for some years, a bulk of the progressive literature would have been

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lost with the passage of time like some odd, unknown and unpopular periodicals.

The beginning of journalism in Kashmiri language is attributed to poet Mahjoor who started a 4-page tabloid weekly *Gaash* in August 1940. Its first issue carried messages from Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz followed by Mahjoor's own poem,

Sangarmaalan piov pragaash (The mountain peaks are aglow with morning light). Rest of the two pages were devoted to some local news and some advertisements. It was only after the third issue of *Gaash* was published that all of a sudden Mahjoor stopped its publication on the plea that due to the World War II, the cost of paper had gone sky rocketing and that he could not afford continuing of his Kashmiri Weekly.

It was then in 1965, that a serious attempt was made by this writer when he started the first ever serious and of a very high standard Kashmiri newspaper in April 1965 titled *Wattan* (Motherland).

Besides *Kong Posh* and *Gulrez,* a number of poetic collections were brought out to preserve the progressive literature in Kashmiri language

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which also included on their pages poetics of patriotism with particular reference to Kashmir which had been undergoing tumultuous conditions with the partition of the sub continent in 1947 when the entire India and Pakistan got engulfed in communal riots across the cities and villages of the divided India.

A similar collection of patriotic poems in Kashmiri titled *Yi chhu soan watan* (This is our motherland) was compiled just after the India-Pakistan war of 1965. Obviously the poems in this 128-page compilation carried highly charged emotional poems mainly against Pakistan and its armed forces, reiterating faith in the Indian democracy and defying Pakistani army rule. Fazil Kashmiri wrote a poem *pakistanas aakhir haar.* A couple of stanzas of this insipid poetry are given here:

We're one and tell Pakistan about this unity
The aggressors shall retreat
Finally, Pakistan shall be defeated
Tell Pakistan, we're roaring lions
Let them not play a losing game
Pakistan shall be defeated.

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When all the 53 poems collected in this book are analysed, an impartial critic cannot but express his opinion honestly that most of these compositions are politically motivated and are not the poetics of a high standard but versified statements which may also be called slogans raised under the influence of a particular happening. Still the publication has its own place in the poetic treasure of Kashmiri language. On the persistent demand of some progressive Urdu writers, the State Cultural Conference decided to bring out a quarterly in this popular language of the sub continent. The first issue of the magazine also titled *Kong Posh Urdu* was published in June 1954 under the editorship of Ali Mohammad Lone, Ghulam Rasool Nazki and Ghulam Nabi Firaq.

This issue carried an editorial detailing the political situation around and the role of progressive intellectuals to confront forces of exploitation, perpetration and subjugation. Among other things, it said,

"Today, the people of Kashmir are also faced with the problem of international peace. The people of Kashmir want to live a peaceful life

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and they have, time and again, expressed this desire vehemently. Last year, when the representative Kashmiri writers, poets, artists, singers and other intellectuals held a convention in Srinagar and set up the State Cultural Conference, the peace loving and democratic people were represented in the manifesto of the Conference.

"Though the people of Kashmir had not seen the horrifying and frightful happenings of the World War II; they had not undergone the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a result of the dropping of atomic bomb on these two Japanese cities by the American imperialist forces killing instantly lakhs of innocent Japanese citizens. Still, the Kashmiris know it for certain that armed aggression and war is a curse for the human being which destroys the centuries old common heritage, art and culture of the people. In case, the atomic energy is used for launching of wars, the whole world shall become a heap of dust and rubble. The people all over the world are therefore against war. The people of Kashmir also have the same opinion that is cherished by the people across the globe.

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"The writers of Kashmir represent similar feelings as the spokesmen of the common man and join hands with him in a struggle with all those who love peace and hate and detest war," said the editorial.

Besides a number of eminent local writers, renowned non-Kashmiri creative writers including prominent critic of the Urdu world, Ale Ahmad Saroor and Ghulam Rabbani Taban, Kamal Ahmad Siddiqi, Kanwal Nain Parwaz, Ali Sardar Jafri, Upendra Nath Ashk and Lutf Sahrai also contributed to the periodical with their attractive compositions on the natural beauties of Kashmir Valley and other relevant topics.

Rahman Rahi's write up *Hamari Adabi Tahreek* , Prof P N Pushp's *Kashmiri Shaayiri main Jazbaat Nigaari,* two beautiful poems on Kashmir by Ale Ahmad Saroor and Kamal Siddiqi, Ladakhi folk songs by Akbar Ladakhi, and *Hamari Mousiqi* by Mohal Lal Aima could be described as the most valuable contributions to the journal.

Unfortunately, Ghulam Rasool Nazki and Ghulam Nabi Firaq slipped out of this literary service and its second and the last issues was all

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alone edited by Ali Mohammad Lone which was published in December 1954.That was the sad end of this memorable progressive venture.

Among other noteworthy Kashmiri journals mention may be made of a unique quarterly, *Naeb* which Amin Kamil brought out under his editorship in October 1968. The *Naeb* must be considered as the first ever Kashmiri journal which provided adequate space on its pages to subjects other than literature, including science, history, film, the secret of the sleep, art of painting, translations of Khalil Jibran and the like. After publishing its seventeen issues regularly, *Naeb* discontinued its print edition in October 1971 which was afterwards turned into an e-paper by Kamil's son, Muneeb-ur Rehman from the USA.

Earlier, in August 1957, *Kashmir Bazm-e-Adab*, Delhi , a literary forum of Kashmiri Pandits settled in Delhi, started the publication of yet another bi-monthly magazine *Pamposh* which helped a lot to propagate the progressive Kashmiri literary in the Indian capital city and also elsewhere wherever the Kahmiri knowing people lived across the country. The progressive

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writers who regularly contributed to *Pamposh* were Akhtar Mohiuddin, Ali Mohammad Lone, Iqbal Kaul, Deepak Kaul, Ghulam Nabi Khayal, Dina Nath Nadim, Abdul Sattar Ranjoor, Ghulam Nabi Firaq, Triloki Nath Kundan and Haleem Kashmiri. The magazine also included some pages in its issues in Devnagri script which were in fact writings in Kashmiri language. Its last issue saw the light of the day in December 1959.

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CHAPTER SEVEN
Influence of Urdu Progressive Literature on Kashmiri

It was some time earlier than reaching of the progressive writers' movement into Kashmir Valley that this movement had taken roots in the Indian sub continent.

However the surfacing of progressivism in Urdu world had a long background to push it ahead of many other movements running simultaneously.

The noted Urdu writer, Ali Jawad Zaidi, in his monumental *A History of Urdu Literature* narrates in details about historical and interesting background and it is quite relevant that this exhaustive excerpt from his work is reproduced here for the reader to understand as to how Urdu progressive literature came into being outside Kashmir. Zaidi writes,

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"In Urdu literature, progressive themes did not appear all at once. The first to raise the banner of Marxism were Maulana Barkatullah Bhopali and Maulana Hasrat Mohani. Bhopali is known more as the Prime Minister of the provincial government of India set up in exile by Raja Mahendra Pratap. Hasrat wrote a few articles on the Russian revolution and vaguely touched upon Marxism in his writings that were journalese but these were seldom reflected in his poetry. There is a solitary reference to the Soviet system, *Aaina-e-Soviet* and obtuse insinuations to the struggle ahead but to both Hasrat and Barkatullah, the ideology or its practical application is not of immediate concern and even as a righteous dream it is distant. Hasrat ultimately gave his blessings to the Progressive Writers movement when it came to be organised.

In the Daily *Tribune*, New York of 25 June 1853, Karl Marx while discussing pathetically the state of the slavery of India, wrote, "This goes without saying that the atrocities perpetrated on India by the British rulers, were harsher than that ruthlessness faced by the Indians earlier. Civil wars, attacks, revolutions and draughts destroyed

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India but its adverse affect would be of a cursory nature. On the contrary, England trampled down under its feet entire social structure of India, Thus, Indians lost their past glory and they could not forge a new one for themselves. It seems that the enslavement of India severed its relationship with old traditions and ancient history in its totality." Freedom fighters like Sarojini Naidu, Mohammad Ali Jauhar and Zafar Ali Khan also contributed to the national movement with their forceful writings.

Then, one hears the striking voice of Iqbal who accents the belief that social injustices are perpetrated by the prevailing social order. In the regional and religious contexts of his overall ideology, this belief is often so hedged in that it eludes the universality in it... The thinking in his closing years bears a tilt to the left of the centre, as he opined himself out in an informal chat with Nehru.

The valuable contribution made by Dr Sir Muhammad Iqbal to furthering the cause of freedom struggle furthered by the Kashmiri progressivism is of great significance mainly due to the fact that Iqbal visited Kashmir only once

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during his life time but was regrettably disturbed and deeply perturbed with the agonising plight of subjugated Kashmiris who had been turned into hapless creatures under the autocratic Dogra rule for not less than 101years.

While going through the Persian and Urdu poetry of this *Poet of the East* which he wrote particularly during a long period of his life, Kashmir therein is found as a dominant subject of his thought and expression of anguish.

It was 44th year of his life in June 1921 that Iqbal visited Kashmir for the first time. He had spent all these years together in pangs of separation from his motherland. This deep feeling he had expressed many a time in his compositions like this one:

Moti Adan se laal huaa hai Yaman se door,
Ya naafa-e- ghazaal huaa hai Khutan se door.
Hindustan main aaye hain Kashmir choad kar,
Bulbul ne aashiyana banaya chaman se door.

(The pearl has fallen apart from Eden; Diamond has gone far away from Yemen,
Or, the musk of gazelle, is no more in Khutan,
We left Kashmir and came down into India.

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As if, the nightingale built his nest far way from the garden)

Iqbal's brief stay in Kashmir left indelible marks of disgust and disappointment on his sensitive mind and he went to the extent of cursing those who had made the people of Kashmir into suppressed subjects with the use of brute state force and unabated subjugation. He says:

Panja-e- zulm-o- jahaalat ne bura haal kiyaa
Ban ke miqraaz hamain be par-o-be baal kiyaa
Toad us dast-e-jafa kesh ko ya Rab jis ne
Rooh-e-azad-e-Kashmir ko pamaal kiyaa.

(The heinous state of affairs of cruelty and people's ignorance has engulfed badly this land,
The wings of people have been clipped;
I pray before Allah that those ruthless hands are chopped off,
which trampled down the spirit of the freedom of Kashmir)

While cursing the forces of oppression and suppression in this enslaved paradise on earth, Iqbal also prayed before Almighty for bringing about a revolution in the Kashmir mind which would turn ashes into flames:

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Azaan moi fushaan qatr-e-bar Kasheeri
Ki khaakistarash aafreenad sharaare

(O God! Shower the people of Kashmir with one drop of that nectar,
Which would turn their ashes into flames).

The modern history of Kashmir is full of Maharaja Gulab Singh's inhuman cruelties against Kashmiris. Almost all the histories of Kashmir bear testimony to this frightful fact that the Maharaja would skin alive his opponents inflicting upon them the most painful death publicly.

All along his 61-year long life, Iqbal remained mentally and emotionally involved in political and social conditions prevailing in Kashmir and did not miss any opportunity to express himself in solidarity with his separated brethren.

Like a genuine and sensitive poet, Iqbal minutely monitored the situation in Kashmir from time to time and, on occasions, he was disturbed over the enslavement of the people who had seemingly reconciled to their fate and had rather surrendered before the authorities. He laments:

Kasheeri ki baa bandagi khoo giriftah,

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Butey me taraashad zi sang-e-mazaare
Zameerash tihi az khayaal-e-bulande
Khudi na shinaase zi khud sharamsaare.

(A Kashmiri is so accustomed to slavery,
That he carves out an idol from every grave store,
His conscience is void of great thought,
He feels ashamed of himself,
For, he doesn't know the essence of ego).

Iqbal was quite eager that the Muslims of Kashmir forge unity and make themselves into an effective and active organisation to shed away the yoke of slavery. To clarify this controversial point, I may state here with the support of records and with full responsibility that despite this desire, Iqbal never advocated the formation of any secular political party in Kashmir as has been wrongly stated by Sheikh Mohamamd Abdullah in his book titled *Aatash-e-Chinar*.

However, Iqbal's vision of Kashmir for its tomorrow was always in his mind and he undoubtedly had a foresight that the fate of millions of downtrodden and miserable people of Kashmir shall take a turn for better, for their freedom and for a bright future. It was not

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therefore a coincidence that in June 1921, he wrote his prophetic *Saqi Namah* while resting in *Nishat* Garden in Srinagar in which he also said:

Ba reesham qaba khwaaja az mehnat-e-ou
Naseeb-e-tanash jaama-e-taar taarey

(The silk woven by a Kashmiri labourer is the attire of a rich man,
But his own wear is torn out rags).

It was only three years later that in 1924, workers in Srinagar Silk Factory rose in rebellion against exploitation and misuse of their hard labour.

Iqbal was obsessed with Kashmir to the extent of his being frenzied in an abounding love for his motherland. Dr Khalifa Abdul Hakim says, "On occasions, he intensely and sadly felt about what was faced by the people of Kashmir in their unending days of slavery and backwardness."

According to the scholars of *Iqbaliyaat*, he would always prefer to have formal or informal conversation with those who came from Kashmir and this would be his top priority to interact with Kashmiri delegations and individuals. He would dismiss even his life long

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friends and colleagues for spending more time with Kashmiris. Hafeez Jalandhari narrates from such an instance saying, "One day, when Iqbal was staying at his *Anarkali* house in Lahore, his domestic servant, Ali Bakhsh, brought in a slip of paper. The slip had the names of Saduddin Shawl and Syed Noor Shah Naqshbandi from Srinagar. Iqbal immediately asked for their audience. They told him about harrowing tales of the miseries of Kashmiri people. The crux of the conversation was that in the whole sub-continent, only the people of Kashmir were forced to live the life of animals under different regimes imposed on them against their will and acceptance. Iqbal told them not to lose heart and remain united. They left with crestfallen faces and I saw that tears were rolling down from the eyes of Allama Iqbal."

It is a bitter fact of the contemporary history of the Indian sub-continent that among all those Kashmiri stalwarts who made a mark in their respective fields all over India and even abroad, it was only Iqbal whose heart bled whenever he heard about unbelievable atrocities perpetrated against Kashmiris.

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During the fifth decade of twentieth century Krishan Cnander compiled a voluminous Urdu collection of progressive writings, *Naye Zaaviye* which included selected writings of leading progressive writers of undivided India. Among the towering progresive writers were included Mulk Raj Anand, Josh Malihabadi, Ismat Chughtai, Akhtar Orainvi, Akhtarul Iman, Ehsan Danish, Ahmad Faraz, Zaheer Kashimiri, Habib Jalib, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Sadat Hassan Mantoo, N M Rashid, Faiz, Dr Taseer, Ehtisham Hussain, A R Chughtai, Devinder Stayarthi, Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi, Majaz, Sardar Jafri, Jazbi, Yusuf Zafar, Makhdoom, Majeed Amjad, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Bedi, Mumtaz Mufti, Sahir, Qayoon Zafar, Raja Mehdi Ali Khan, Fikr Taunsvi, Akhtarul Iman, Makhmoor Jalandhari, Salam Machlishehri, Zia Jalandhari, Akhtar Hussain Raipuri, Abdul Hameed Adam, Hajira Masroor, Firaq, and Hafeez Hoshiarpuri.

This significant collection of progressive Urdu prose, poetry and criticism was published by *Maktaba-e-Urdu,* Lahore in November 1944.

When a mention is made of some great sons of the soil- Kashmir- among whom are included

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Tej Bahadur Sapru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Momin Khan Momin, Allama Datatariya Kaifi, Brij Narain Chakbast, Rattan Nath Sarshar, Daya Shanker Nasim, Sadat Hassan Mantoo, Krishan Chander, Agha Hashr Kashmiri, Chiragh Hassan Hasrat, Shourish Kashmiri and many other luminaries of similar intellectual genius, it is sadly found that they did not divert their attention and creative capabilities to bring to the fore the conditions of Kashmir, which, on the other hand, a European traveler, Robert Thorp, highlighted vehemently in his epoch making book *Kashmir Misgovernance* for which he had to pay the heavy price of his dear life.

In this backdrop, Allama Iqbal emerges exceptionally as a dedicated lover, a man of solidarity and a crusader of the Kashmir cause, its culture and heritage; of *Kashmiriyat* and of the people's struggle against tyranny and autocracy.

"When death snatched him, the international progressive movement had already begun. Nazism and Fascism had raised their ugly hood in Europe and in thirties threatened to destroy the basic values the humanity cherished. The

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need was felt among the intellectuals of the world that the Fascist designs must be frustrated to save culture and civilisation. Progressive forces were being suppressed ruthlessly and intellectuals were being banished. A World Conference of Writers for the defense of culture was convened at Paris in July 1935.

A small group of Indian progressives had also been active at the time in London and decided to set up the Indian Progressive Writers Association. Among those who gave it a shape on a proper intellectual basis in Kashmir were Prof H N Durrani, N N Raina, D P Dhar, Ghulam Rasool Renzu, G M Rajpuri, Kanwar Mohamamd Ashraf, Sajjad Zaheer, Mulk Rj Anand, Abdul Aleem, Akhtar Hussain Raipuri, Mohammad Din Taseer, Rashid Jahan, Ahmad Ali and Mahmoodu-z-Zafar.

"The first comprehensive statement of views was contained in an article *Adab aur Zindagi* by Akhtar Hussain Raipuri. It was on the same lines as a draft circulated by Sajjad Zaheer but Raipuri was more explicit and comprehensive. It was published first in Hindi and later in Urdu and finally in the form of a book *Adab aur*

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Inquilab. He presented a manifesto at the Nagpur session of the *Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad* setting forth the aims and objects of the new Indian literature embodying the views of the London based progressives in their manifesto earlier. The Nagpur manifesto was signed among others by Jawaharlal Nehru, Acharya Narendra Dev, Munshi Prem Chand and Molvi Abdul Haq. The two manifestos in essence affirmed that living literature should not only be the mirror of life but should also aim at changing by showing the path of progress and by aspiring to serve humanity at large. It called for the preservation of the traditions so dear to us, simultaneously undertaking a critical re-examination of the traditions and rejecting all that is obsolete and unhealthy.

The first conference of the Indian progressive writers was held in April 1936, under the president ship of Prem Chand, the noted short story writer and novelist.

In his presidential address Prem Chand said, "Our literary taste is fast changing and the literature now is not the kind of joy. It now speaks of issues faced by us in our lives and to

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find out their resolution. we will only accept the type of litelature which will have thought and the spirit for freedom; which will enlighten the spirit of beauty an progress; the literature should not throw us into a slumber for, too much of sleeping is the sign of death."

Although it was an all India movement and influenced most of the Indian languages in varying degrees, Urdu writers and poets felt its impact most. Some critics have identified *Angarey,* a collection of short stories as the earliest specimen of progressive writing. There is no doubt that it appeared on the literary scene in1932, like a big explosion and annoyed the orthodox sections considerably. They mounted a powerful protest and succeeded in getting it banned. The stories were not technically of a very high caliber but sent a message home that nothing was taboo in literature. With all this, it came before the birth of the movement and must be treated as a freak and not the beginning of a movement.

With the popularisation of Urdu progressive movement in India, it soon influenced the Kashmiri writers with this ideology and pages

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of our journals particularly *Kong Posh* were enriched with top ranking names like Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Krishan Chander, Makhdoom Mohiuddin, Asrarul Haq Majaz and others in their Kashmiri translations. Soon, Faiz aad Faiz became a household name in the literary world of Kashmir and his many poems, especially the following ones were on the lips of every progressive Kashmiri writer:

Yeh daagh daagh ujala, yeh shab guzeedah sahar
Ki intizaar tha jis ka yeh woh sahar to naheen
Yeh woh sahar to naheen jis ki aarizu le kar
Chale they yaar ki mil jaaye gi kaheen na kaheen
Falak se dasht main taaroon ki aakhri manzil
Kaheen to hoga shab-e-sust mouj ka sahil.

(The scar-branded dawn, the night bitten morn
Is surely not the morn we have been waiting for?
It is not the morn with whose desire in heart;
Friends had journeyed hoping to find somewhere

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From the skies to the wilderness, the last port of stars,

Trusting that low flowing light has its shores somewhere).

And:

Saal ha saal se be-aasra jakde hue haath

Raat ke sakht o siyah siney main paiwast rahe

Jis tarah tinka samandar main ho sargarm-e-satez

Jis tarah teeragi kohsaar pa yalgaar kare

Aur ab raat ke rangeen o siyah seeney main

Itne hain ghaav ki jis simt nazar uthti hai

Ja-ba-ja noor ne ik jaal sa bun rakha hai

Door se subh ki dhadakan ki sada aati hai

(For years, these friendless, bonded hands;

Remained pierced in the hard and black bosom of night

Like a straw at war with the ocean

Like darkness storming the mountains

And now the hard and black bosom of night;

Bears so many wounds that wherever the eye travels,

It can see that light has woven a lattice work

From afar one hears the throb of the approaching moon)

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Or, Makhdoom's evergreen lyric:

Ik chanbeli ke mandve tale

And, least but not the last, Majaz's heart throbbing poem which also shot heights of matchless popularity in the music world of Bombay movie land. Only two stanzas are reproduced here:

Shahr ki sadkoon pa main nashaad- o-nakaarah phiroon

Jagmagaati, jaagti sadkoon pa awaara phiroon

Ghair ki basti hai kab tak darbadar maraa phiroon

Aiy gham-e-dil kya karoon aiy wahshat-e-dil kya karoon

Yeh rupahli chaaon yeh akaash par taroon ka jaal

Jaise sufi ka tasawwur jaise aashiq ka khayal

Aah lekin kaun jane kaun samjhe ji ka haal

Aiy gham-e-dil kya karoon, aiy wahshat-e-dil kya karoon

(On the city's roads, I wander alone sad and frustrated

On the glittering and wide awake streets, I wander aimlessly

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It is a stranger's land, how long can I knock around from door to door

What shall I do my weeping heart, what can I do my depressed heart?

This silvery shadow, this network of stars on the sky

Like the image of mystic, like imagination of love

Alas! But who knows, or understands the turmoil within

What shall I do my weeping heart, what can I do my depressed heart?)

Earlier, Iqbal had mesmerised the Kashmiri progressive writers with his poetry of life, struggle and unflinching faith in bright future and irrepressible dedication to the total emancipation and economic progress of human being.

It was in this context that most of Iqbal's Persian and Urdu works like *Payaam-e-Mashriq, Baal-e-Jibreel* and *Asrar-e-khudi,* were rendered into Kashmiri and numerous special editions of his life and works were brought out by the governmental, or private cultural institutions from time to time.

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Majaz was so fascinated with this freedom struggle of Kashmir launched in 1931 under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah that he composed a poem after being impressed with the freedom struggle launched by the National Conference party which took the reigns of power into its hands after 1947. The poem, titled *Naya Kashmir* speaks of a new era shaping in this suppressed country by the autocratic rulers for about one century since 1846. Majaz imagines a new star of hope rising over the sky with a glow of optimism for the Kashmiri people.

In fact, there was a lesser number of Kashmiri Urdu poets impressed by the Indian progressive literary movement but still, they did contribute to the language and literature according to their capacities and capabilities. Some of them included Prem Nath Pardesi, Mahendar Raina, Kanwal Nain Parwaz and a few more preferred to write in Urdu but were never accorded recognition in the vast Urdu world of India. Some of them, who had dedicated their entire life in serving the cause of Urdu, were recognised only for their Kashmiri works. Thus, traditional Urdu writers Ghulam Rasool Nazki,

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Mohammad Zaman Azurdah, Farooq Nazki, Hamidi Kashmiri and Rafiq Raaz bagged the Sahitya Akademi award only for the works they had created in their mother tongue and not in Urdu language.

In the fields of criticism, drama, essay, analytical articles and many genres of Urdu literature one does not find any adaptation of such creative writings having been accepted in Kashmiri language by the local progressives, in particular, from the rich treasure of progressive Urdu literature.

Terms related to progressivism, proletarians and bourgeoisie attained different connotations in Kashmir after the setting up of Progressive literary movement. The class of rich and opulent people nicknamed the progressive intellectuals as *proltaari* and the progressives or Communists made a mockery of rich exploiters of the society by calling them *burjuvazees.*

Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, who had assumed the office of the State's prime minister in August 1953, was much apprehensive of growing progressive movement. In order to divert the attention of the people from this

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movement disturbing him and from the activities of *Pongas* (Communits) he started a contrary chain of cultural festivities across the Valley of Kashmir which was publicised as *Jashn-e-Kashmir.* In order to kill two birds with one stone, Bakhshi invited "non-Communist" non-Kashmiri Urdu poets and writers and extended great hospitality to them during their stay in Kashmir. These non-Communist poets from parts of India included Jigar Moradabadi, Fana Nizami, Nashoor Wahidi, Anwar Sabiri, Fiza Ibn Faizi, Akhtar Rizwani, Hassan Naeem, Anwar Mirzapuri, Naresh Kumar Shad, Nakhshab Charjavi, Ravish Siddiqui and Arsh Sahbai who threw praises on Bakhshi in their poetic recitations during largely attended *Musahairas* and also succeeded, to some extent, in diverting the peoples attention from anti-Bakhshi politics and anti-government demonstrations which had already claimed lives of about 1,500 pro- Abdullah workers across the Valley during the gun fire opened on them by the police after 9 August 1953 when Abdullah was dismissed and arrested.

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Many of these Urdu poets wrote laudatory poems to eulogise their mentor, Bakhshi, but they least stamped any positive impression on Kashmiri progressive movement.

One of the most representative collections of progressive Urdu poetry was compiled by Ghulam Rabbani Tabaan, himself a great progressive, under the title of *Shikast-e-Zindaan.* This collection was brought out in May 1953 and noted progressive poets contributing to this unique publication included Ahmad Rahi, Ahmad Riyaz, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, Parvez Shahidi, Jan Nisar Akhtar, Jagan Nath Azad, Josh Malihabadi, Khalilur Rehman Azmi, Ravish Siqqiqui, Sahir Ludhanvi, Sradar Jafri, Sikandar Ali Wajd, Zaheer Kashmiri, Ghulam Rabbani Tabaan, Firaq Gorakhpuri, Fikr Taunsvi, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Kaifi Azmi, Makhmoor Jalandhari, Niyaz Haider and Wamiq Jaunpuri.

The subjects dealt with in *Shikast-e-Zindaan* mostly talked about the rising of the Red China, North Korea's fight against imperialist aggressors, emergence of Iran as a revolutionary power and a warning to the western expansionists to vacate Asia and leave it for the Asian people.

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In the preface of this book, Tabaan strikes hard over the imperialist and fascist forces that had brought under their forcible occupation many countries in Asia and Africa. He writes, "The struggle for freedom by Asian states is the most significant event of this century. It has influenced our writers and artists. In Urdu, numerous poems were written about the movements of liberation of different Asian countries and these creations represent the new consciousness of our writers. Some friends may call it momentary literature and not everlasting, but I would tell them that as Ilea Ehrenberg once said that a writer should not write only for centuries, he should also have the zeal of writing even for a moment on which depends the fate of a nation."

During fifth and sixth decades of 20th century, hundreds of Urdu poets composed poetry to praise the abounding beauties of Kashmir Valley and its most scenic spots attracting sensitive writers everywhere. Ravish Siddiqui compiled a full fledged book of verse on Kashmir which has since been published under the title of *Khayaban Khayaban.* The State Cultural Academy also brought out poems on Kashmir,

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the first volume of C*hinar Rang,* which proved to be full of many errors and mistakes also leaving dozens of genuine poets out of the format of this volume. Now, this writer has compiled its second volume assigned by the Academy which has since been brought out.

In his motivated and calculated conspiracies hatched by Prime Minister Bakhshi in league with his henchmen, including some opportunist writers, the government somehow succeeded in breaking apart the strong fold of progressive writers' organisation which finally came to an unfortunate end in 60s, thus living a very short life lasting nearly for little over one decade.

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CHAPTER EIGHT
Influence of Soviet literature on Kashmiri

Kashmiri writers began studying the great Soviet literature with the formation of Progressive Writers Association with its head quarters set up in Srinagar.

This movement rallied basically around the concept of Marxism and Leninism and its impact on the minds of millions of backward people living across the Globe. The Russian Revolution of 1917, had resulted in awakening of the workers of the world to get united and fight for their rights usurped upon by their feudal exploiters.

This love for a new philosophy and fresh concept of literature soon attracted Kashmiri writers to study thoroughly and then render its selections into Kashmiri. During those days the

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works of Leo Tolstoy, Michael Sholokhov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Anton Chekhov, Maxim Gorky, Ivan Turgenev, Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol, Nokolai Ostrovsky and Mayakovsky attained reverence like most favoured publications.

The writers of Kashmir are proud about the fact that Kashmiri is the only language among all the Indian languages wherein one finds complete translation of Tolstoy's voluminous novel *War and Peace.* This translation was done by Muzaffar Azim about three decades ago in not less than four volumes covering tens of thousands of words. Ali Mohammad Lone translated Gorky's *Mother* into Kashmiri. Since, none of the Kashmiri writers knew Russsian language, all these translations were done by them either from different English versions or from Urdu mostly done by Anwar Azeem and his Russian knowing wife Khateeja Azeem, At that time this couple was employed in the Cultural department of the Soviet embassy in Delhi. Other translations from Russian include Nikolai Gogol's *Inspector General* by Som Nath Zutshi, Chekhov's *Three Sisters* and *The Bear*

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by Rattan Lal Shant, and randomly selected Russian short stories, poems and other literary creations.

It may not be out of place to mention here that some of the translations were done only to attract the Soviet land Award Committee. In this regard, Lone and Azim did receive these awards and Lone was also invited to visit Russia as a member of the delegation of progressive Indian writers and thinkers.

It was the era when Central Asia was also part and parcel of the mighty Soviet Union, The Central Asian states Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan made integral parts of Russia with their own traditional cultural heritage preserved by the inhabitants of these states which had centuries long cultural, economic and social relationship with Kashmir.

During the ruling period of Sultan Sikandar *But Shikan*, (1389-1413), several names are mentioned who were mainly scholars, religious preachers and men of knowledge and wisdom. On top of the list is Mir Syed Ali Hamadani who came to Kashmir in 14thy century to introduce Islam in this land of Hinduism. The caste ridden

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and class stricken Kashmiri Hindus voluntarily embraced Islam which preaches equality for all human beings irrespective of their faith, creed, class of the society or any different personal belief.

Sultan Zainul Abideen (1420-1470) popularly known as *Budshah*, was the son of Sultan Sikandar.

He was a lover of arts, culture and literature. He invited to Kashmir numerous outstanding intellectuals, artisans, craftsmen and poets from Central Asia to live here and make Kashmiris well versed about its 5,000 year old culture, language and historical heritage.

This amalgamation of Kashmir and Central Asia on cultural level resulted in the respective languages of these regions becoming nearer to each other. This relationship is still there in Kashmir where we use Uzbek words like *Somavar, Tasht, Kabab, Kulcha and Zari jama* frequently in our daily conversations.

In the field of literature, Central Asian writers were accepted as close comrades in the Kashmiri writers' fraternity. Today, we have names like Sharaf Rashidov, Mirza Tursun Zadeh and Ali

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Sher Nawai very much known in our literary circles.

The influence of Russian literature on Kashmiri got to a pleasant start from Mahjoor, the national poet of Kashmir. His poetical compositions of pre-1947 period written before the dawn of freedom dawned upon the black horizon of an enslaved Kashmir, speak of his resistance against exploitation, ruthless acts perpetrated on innocent citizens by Maharajas, and their officers. However it was Azad, who, more than Mahjoor, was rather volatile in his anti-imperialist tirade and deeply committed to the ideals of Communism which in his opinion was the only way out for demolishing the castle of feudalism built on the bones and blood of civilian victims. He wrote poems on Marx and the Russian Revolution, and gave vent to his emotions in a long poem *Dayra* which depicts the human life like an ever flowing river with its gushing waters reaching out to the parts of scorched land, the thirsty and the draught hit fields and starving people.

Besides the mention made of a few translations above, after 1947, some efforts were also made

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to get the Russian literature into Kashmiri in more and more numbers of literary pieces but this also remained in view only for some time when the local writers turned their pen towards the mesmerising works of Ghalib, Shakespeare, Omar Khayyam, Hafiz Shirazi and some Indian literatures. As far as deriving inspiration from Russian literature after 1960 is concerned, we again find some excellent pieces of renderings done in Kashmiri. Rahman Rahi's *Veshaakh ta Rafgar*, Nadim's *Signature on the Peace Appeal* and Rahi's *Signature of Peace*, Naji Munawwar's *Do Fakhtayein*, Ghulam Nabi Khayal's *Zindagi ta Maut*, Ali Mohammad Lone's *Dewane ka Khwaab*, and essays and prose translations done by Abdul Sattar Ranjoor, Noor Mohamamd Roshan, Habib Kamran, Arjun Dev Majboor, Sufi Shahid Abdullah and Aziz Haroon. Rahi also wrote introductory and informative articles on Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan which were serialised in some issues of *Kong Posh*. When Nadim's opera *Bombur ta Yembirzal*, was staged in Srinagar. He also wrote another opera titled *Vitasta*. The Tajik writer Mirza Tursun Zadeh translated it into

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his language and Sharaf Rashidov also penned down a similar opera in Uzbek.

In 1968, the outstanding Kashmiri short story writer, Akhtar Mohiuddin visited Russia and wrote a travelogue *Slavamir*, (Salute to Peace), which is very appealing particularly for its sweet diction and for illustrating happenings he had to come across during his visit to the land of the Red Star.

Here, I may make a mention of a research based exhaustive article in Kashmiri on Pushkin which is a part of my Sahitya Akademi award winning book (1975) *Gaashiry Munaar*. This is the first ever critical analysis of this Russian poet which was afterwards used by several magazines in Kashmir and in other parts of India.

Naji Munawwar wrote a brief informative article on Lenin which was published in *Naeb* magazine in its issue of April 1070.

There are some more translations of Russian, Chinese and other progressive literatures done randomly into Kashmiri. They are: *On the Gallows* by Julius Fucik translated by Aziz Haroon, Jin Ching Chao's Chinese tale *Apple Blossoms* by Habib Kamran, Chekhov's *Will She*

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Leave?, by Aziz Haroon, Chinese short story, *New Leaders* by Aziz Haroon, Gorky's *When He was Born* by Rahman Rahi, Gorky's article, *What the Saviours of Humanity aspire for?* By Aziz Haroon, Gorky's *That Boy,* A Russian short story on World War II, *The Candle* by Som Nath Zutshi. Ilea Ehrenberg's *The Writer and His Art* by Mohammad Maqbool, *a Song from Tajikistan* by Ghulam Nabi Firaq and a Russian folk tale, *The Court of Snow King* by Sufi Shahid Abdullah. *(All the entries have been mentioned after going through various issues of Kong Posh between 1950 and 1956.)*

There is hardly any impressive piece of literature, poetry, fiction or even a critical write-up found in *Gulrez* which would reflect progressive ideology. But certain topics dealt with in this tri-lingual magazine, published in Kashmiri, Urdu and Persian, are quite useful for the researchers of Kashmiri language, culture, fine arts, history and heritage. Such good contributions include Maulana Hairat Pandani's *Kashmiri Mousiqi, The Art of Dancing in Kashmir* by Pandit Jiya Lal Kaul Naazir, *Dogri Language and its Poetry* by Jagdesh Chandar

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Bharti, *The History of Paper Machie* by Fazil Kashmiri, *Drama in Kashmiri* by Pandit Naazir, *Lyrical and Romantic Poetry in Urdu* by Dr Aziz Ahmad Qureshi, *The Great Deeds of Sultan Zainul Abideen* by Mohammad Ibrahim, *Indo-Aryan Languages* by Dr Mohiuddin Qadiri Zore, *The Muslims of India* by Jagan Nath Azad, *Kashmiri idioms and Proverbs* by Akbar Ali Ansari and *Shrimad Bhagwat Gita* by Nila Kanth Sharma.

However, the revival of *Gulrez* in November 1960 under my editor ship provided a variety of substantial material as compared to its earlier period. Also, content wise it was much better a periodical than the previous period of *Gulrez*. There were catchy *articles* like *My Travelogue of China* by Mirza Arif, *Art and Technique* by Moti Lal Jailkhani, *Pyramids of Egypt* by Altaf Shaukat, serialised Kashmiri substitutes of artisans' technical terms, Comprehensive articles on Homer, Dante and Pushkin by Ghulam Nabi Khayal, *Kashmiri Language* by Aurtar Kishen Rahbar, *What is Culture* by T S Eliot, *Mustafa Kamal of Turkey* by Ghulam Rasool Madhosh, *The Children's Literature* by Naji Munawwar, a

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portion of Euripides' *Medea* by Ghulam Nabi Khayal and Naji Munawwar's Russian tale for children titled *The Cock and the Rat.*

I take pleasure to reproducing here some of the relevant excerpts from my 21-page article on Pushkin from *Gaashiry Munaar.*

"After his death, for about thirty to forty years, Pushkin was not even mentioned in literary treatises or debates by his contemporaries. The majority of readers either differed with his ideas or they put forth contradictory opinion about him. However, this eerie silence was broken when in 1880, Dostoevsky in his famous *Pushkin Address* analysed the Poet's great art and drew the peoples' rapt attention towards his genius. After the 50-year period of the copyright of Pushkin's works expired, his publications were published in reprints in large numbers and it was within no time that the Russian readership recognised their great writer and he was ushered in the honourable court where Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe had been placed. Maxim Gorky had already said about Pushkin that he was the greatest artist of the entire world."

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The progressive Russian novel has been undoubtedly the remarkable segment of the literature of USSR wherefrom we had outstanding classics like Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Michael Sholokhov's *And Quiet flows the Don*, Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, Maxim Gorky's *Mother*, Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamozov* and *Crime and Punishment*, Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered* and some more world class novels written for the first time in the world literature.

Ostrovsky's following quote has gained worldwide acclaim and is more often than not repeated on relevant occasions. He says, ***"Man's dearest possession is life. It is given to him but once, and he must live it so as to feel no torturing regrets for wasted years, never know the burning shame of the mean and petty past; so live that, dying he might say: all my life, all my strength were given to the finest cause in all the worlds- the fight for the Liberation of Mankind."***

In fact, the progressive writers' movement in Kashmir was in its primary stage and crawling at a snail's pace towards a goal which had been

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defined to them roughly by the creative writings of Marx, Angles and Lenin. This could not divert their attention to reading voluminous Russian novels which were also loaded with unpronounceable names of characters for a Kashmiri reader.

The Russian novel in Kashmir was somehow introduced by Ali Mohammad Lone who rendered *Mother* into simple diction of his mother tongue and it gained a little popularity in comparison with the translation of *War and Pea*, full of bombastic words and terminology.

Gradually, when Kashmiri writers turned their mind towards going through Western literature they were quite impressed by Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde and even by T S Eliot and Ezra Pound. This study added new dimensions to the creative capabilities of Kashmiri writers and a valuable selection of the English literature in the form of translations or adaptations enriched the Kashmiri language.

With the breaking of the USSR and a cession to the cold war, the Russian literature could not compete with its memorable period of Russian novels and thereafter the poetry of progressivism

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changed its stance to suit the requirements of time, though not so satisfactorily where a poor man was being lured to take on the rich and the exploiter and help bring about people's revolution in the entire enslaved Asia and Africa.

The Russian literature, afterwards, also could not produce outstanding creations and it was almost forgotten as compared to western or eastern literatures in English, Persian, or even some major Indian languages.

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CHAPTER NINE
Translations of some progressive and patriotic poems

ABDUL AHAD AZAD
(1) THE RIVER

My yearnings find expression
In bubbles, commotion, tumult;
It's in wandering to distant goals,
That I find the music of life

I move on day and night
Through rocks, ravines and ditches;
I do not pause for praise,
I do not pause for play;
I am at home with the bats
As I am with the bulbuls

Flattery cannot tickle me

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Nor disparagement makes me falter;
A purpose brought me here
And I live to see it through;
I am not fettered, as men are,
By the fear of disapprobation

Forever fairing forward,
I know no turning back;
I don't adorn myself like flowers,
Nor build nests like the bulbuls;
My delight is in swift eddies,
Revolution and earthquakes

I cleave the sides of the banks and bunds,
And level the high ground with the low;
Leaping o'er proud, strong obstructions,
I scare their wits away.

I do not seek a fight,
But meeting it, I do not quail.

I hurl myself against stone ramparts
And other mortal barriers;
Then collecting once again the fragments
Of my scattered self,

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I hurl down rocks, wear down hills
And roam in the forests free.

I give wings to the cloud
And the gift of mercy to the rain,
And it's I who dress the firmament
In blue and purple robes;
Mine is the voice of the thunder,
Mine the flame in the lightning.

I spread green velvet carpets
On my banks for friends,
For tired limbs of hard-worked labour
And for lovers of pleasure;
They come and sit and bathe and drink,
In freedom and in joy

But I do not wait on any one!
Hindus, Muslims, men of wealth,
Rajas, nawwabs come and rest,
Seeking balm for bruised spirits
But to me they are all suppliants
Among the many who come to me.

I shall not rest till the world is rid

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Of the embankments that divide,
Of ditch and hollow that deform
Its smooth and lovely face
This passion, like a consuming fire,
Burns me even though I'm water

Coming and going, birth and death
Are all the same to me
I don't wonder who will come,
Nor grieve at the fine men gone—
Futile fears and anxieties,
Which trouble the weak of heart

Big mountains know my might,
For I split their hearts asunder;
But with gentle caressing hands I bathe
The bodies of beautiful girls
My flowing stream and waves and eddies
Are bursting with truth and love

I play soft tones on my *santoor*
To flowers and the bulbuls,
But the thunder of the drums of revolution
Is my music for hard-hearted rocks
My gurgling sound is sweet indeed,

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But it hides a potent fire.

Puppets of time,
However great,
Quail at the wrath of my waves;
But I play the nurse to flower shrubs
And feed them with my milk;
To the cedar, pine and cypress
I've given my life without stint.

I love to be gentle, I love to play
In the midst of loveliness;
I carry drink to the thirsty iris
In gracefully moving streams,
And I stop to obtain the image
Of the lotus in bloom in the lake

(2) REVOLUTION

What is life but the Book of Revolution?
Change-more change- and yet more change!

Flux is the living reality,
And change the meaning of flux.

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It's change that brought forth religion
Banished doubt, revealed true faith

Now reason has banished prophecy—
Only poetry and trade remain.

Advance! Open the gates of the garden of love;
Your own sight is veiling your eyes.

Ask flowers how cruel spring is,
Breaking frost with a shower of hail

To the sheep and the goat, the butcher and the wolf
Are alike— one slays, the other drains blood.

The law has sanctioned human slaughter;
Mean jackals are feasting on lions' blood.

O compulsion! Slavery! Subjection!
O restless, helpless heart! O shame!

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Rend the veil! Uncover the seething,
bubbling heart!
Change! Change! Bring a new change.

GHULAM AHMAD MAHJOOR

(1) FREEDOM

Raise, a song of praise, for Freedom has come
to us,
At long last, its radiance shines on us.

This freedom, while it rains mercy on the west
Has nothing but hollow thunder for us.

Poverty, destitution, apathy and speechlessness
It is with these blessings that Freedom has
come to us

Freedom is a hourie; can it roam from door to
door?
Very few homes are blessed with her gracious
presence

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It proclaims to eradicate capitalism root and branch,
But has started amassing capital in the hands of her own friends

There is mourning in people's homes
Yet rulers like bridegrooms
Are in dalliance with freedom in secluded places.

Nabir Sheikh knows it well; his wife was abducted.
While he went to make a complaint
She delivered a baby in a stranger's house.

All are dumb-founded, restless at heart!
They can't express their sufferings
Freedom gets annoyed.

(2) *COME, GARDENER!*

Come, gardener! Create the glory of spring!
Make
Guls bloom and bulbuls sing— create such haunts!

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The dew weeps and your garden lies desolate;
Tearing their robes, your flowers are distracted;
Breathe life once again into the lifeless gul and
the bulbul!

Rank nettles hamper the growth of your roses;
Weed them out, for look thousands of laughing
hyacinths are crowding at the gate!

Who will set you free, O! Captive bird?
Crying in your cage? Forge with your own
hands
The instruments of your deliverance!

Wealth and pride and comfort, luxury and
authority,
Kingship and governance—all these are yours!
Wake up, sleeper, and know these as yours!

Bid good-bye to your dulcet strains; to rouse
This habitat of flowers, create a storm,
Let thunder rumble, Let there be an earthquake!

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(3) *OUR LAND IS A GARDEN*

The bulbul sings to the flowers:
A garden is our land.

The hyacinth says to the violet,
'Why are you hiding thus?
Come down from the woods to the garden.'
A garden is our land!

Like walls of white marble
The mountain peaks enclose
A sunny space of emerald green
A garden is our land

The early spring has come again
And camped on mountain heights,
And tulips blow in Shalimar.
A garden is our land

The sweet gift of spring
To fountain, rivulets, streams
And water falls in music.
A garden is our land

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Colourful flowers bloom
In gardens and on hill and mountain;
Forests, ravines and river banks.
A garden is our land

Blossoms are everywhere
In orchards and on hills,
And drunken sings the bulbul.

MIRZA GHULAM HASSAN BEIG ARIF

POEM

The hill-stream goes on singing:
"I come dashing along
To find my heaven of peace,
(While I am young and strong,)
For youth will not endure.

"I gush forth from my source,
My flow does not abate,
I feel a zest for life,
Life ever does urge me on.

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"I splash along my way,
I strike the rocks, I bleed,
I do not rest, I strive;
Vigilance knows no rest.

"I am yet young and wild,
I fret and fume and roar;
It is the silent deep
That bears the priceless pearl.

'In the ocean vast,
One finds one's haven of peace."
This is what Arif' says,
These are his precious gems.

ABDUL SATTAR AASI

SHORT POEM

Come and see for yourself
What is happening to a labourer,
The rich decamp with his earnings.
An affluent person does not bother about his poor neighbour,
Instead, he sucks his blood while claiming to be his sympathiser.

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One who is free, is composed and comfortable,
But a labourer is always carrying burden of
penury on his shoulders.

DINA NATH NADIM

(1) *MY HOPE OF TOMORROW*

I dream of tomorrow
When the world will be beautiful!

O how bright the day, how green the grass!
Flowers paradisal, Earth aching with joy,
And dancing fountains of love in the breast!
The world will be beautiful!

A rare confluence of happy stars!
With my eyes sparkling without collyrium,
Rose-red nipples, breasts swelling with milk—
The world will be beautiful!

At the infant's first cry and sucking at my
breasts,
My pain will change into a thrill of joy
And the walls of my room shine like gold.

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The world will be beautiful!

Drinking in the glad sounds through a crack in the door,
He'll move out smiling, head proudly held high,
While I sing softy to my baby's father.
The world will be beautiful!

Then friends will come, wishing my joy,
Each with a gift of money for the child,
While I, a proud mother, will display my treasure.
The world will be beautiful!

They say war is breaking out,
But surely not tomorrow
When the world will be beautiful!
It can't break out tomorrow!

I dream of tomorrow
When I have a rendezvous!

When the soft dark comes, I'll be a Heemaal
Bursting with love, waiting behind the shrubs

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He may be late, but I will bear patience
I have a rendezvous!

Then love's gait and footfall! He peers into
every bush
And finds me gathering flowers for his garland
He whispers my name, but I'm looking at the
flowers.
I have a rendezvous!

He begs, he entreats, but I do not lift my head
He clasps my knees and our eyes meet
And I am in the arms. Who can hold back my
tears?
I have a rendezvous!

I pour out my woes, my head in his lap,
Show him love's scars on my silver-pure heart,
Ask him why he has enmeshed me thus.
I have a rendezvous!

Then his pledge that youth and joy will meet
And love no longer is fugitive.
The past is past, let's welcome the dawn.
I have a rendezvous!

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They say war is breaking out,
But surely not tomorrow
When I have a rendezvous!
It can't break out tomorrow!

I dream of tomorrow
When my husband is coming!

I'll run to the door when he calls my name
And, holding him tight, dance with delight
Then I'll make him a nice, soft couch of grass,
And keep the package he has brought home
safe near his bed.

My husband is coming!

The package is a garden of flowers for me
Print for me, rings and pendants for Jaan
And money for dear Habib's circumcision
My husband is coming!

We'll all have new clothes for the coming Eid,
A couple of lambs for sacrifice
And sweets for all Habib's class-mates

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My husband is coming!

They say war is breaking out,
But surely not tomorrow
When my husband is coming!
It can't break out tomorrow.

(2) *Determination*

Red and warm, red and warm,
My blood is red and warm
My youth the force of a storm

For Kashmir, my land, a martyr I would die
And whirlpools do not fill the wind with trepidation
Lulled in the Dal Lake, waves should not hide and linger
That's why, that's why
My blood is red and warm.

What joy to fight, O! for my country's liberation!
To chase out the frost and make the garden bloom!

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My spurs are the unforgotten tears of yesterday.
I have a new fire, a new determination.
That's why, that's why
My blood is red and warm.

Lightening signal me to turn bright and
thunder;
Restless quakes point to a new apocalypse;
Flowers blooming on martyrs' graves
Give new blood to my veins
The love of vernal blossoms gives me the
lion's roar.
That's why, that's why
My blood is red and warm

The narcissus and the hyacinth have a new fire
in their eyes,
For the rich have learned to kneel
Before the impecunious peasant
Spring and youth have come to bless grey-
haired wrinkled hopes
And centuries old yearnings are tossing restless
in my breast.
That's why, that's why
My blood is red and warm.

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(3) *OUR MOTHERLAND*

Our motherland a flower, the lusty prime of spring
Bower in Shalimar
Ardour of young innocence
Excitement of new clothes
Lovers uniting after a quarrel
A lotus in full
Memory of one's love

A habitat of flowers
Children's cheeks flushed with joy
Delightful greenery
The drunkenness of youth
First love

The light of one's eyes
Pure gold for one's daughter
Hope nearing fulfillment
Infant dawn
Joy of the peasant woman adopting a child
The wild abandon of youth

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A lovely village
Peasant's siesta after hard toil
An evening on the Dal Lake
A green almond
A long absent uncle arriving from the village
with a gift of apples
Sweetness flowing from mother's breasts

Softest wool
Garden conjured up by the embroiderer's
needle
The cool feel of silk
A broad bordered shawl
Youth carved on the walnut wood
The vision of plenty

We are her sentinels
With the voice of Lal Ded ringing in our ears
The fire of Habba Khatoon glowing in our
hearts
And with new music we stand today-
With sweet songs that sing on the lips of the
spring breeze
Our motherland

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(4) *The Moon*

The moon rose from behind the mountain,
Dressed in worn-out, threadbare Pampuri
tweed;
Open collar with frayed hands revealing
Sad dark satins on silver white skin;
With a face like a big round loaf of bread,
Dull like a false rupee a contractor
Gives some ignorant woman labourer
By guile, mixed with other coins
The moon a loaf and the mountains hungry
The clouds put out again their kitchen fires,
But the forest fairies lit their stoves
And rice seemed to grow on mountain peaks
I gave the glad news to my starving belly
And gazed with all eyes at the hopeful sky

NOOR MOHAMMAD ROSHAN

A Martyr's Mother

My martyr son,
I'm your mother,
And give you my

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Love and blessings

I remember your
Childhood and youth,
When you sucked milk,
And swayed in a cradle,
And grew up steadily,
But unlike others
And I watched you,
Every morn and eve

You didn't bear
Homeland in bondage,
In penury, in wails,
And left behind,
Your friends and play-mates,
Near and dear ones,
Flesh and blood,
To face lances
On your youthful bosom

You shed blood For the Shalimar
Of homeland,
For her roses,
For her spring,

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Enlivening her.

Flowers and birds
Try to wake you up
From a deep slumber.
But I'm told
You bear a frown
Upon your brow
And feel sick
To know my plight,
And a scar on my heart

So I tell the gardener,
Who knows not
To keep a promise,
To fulfill a pledge,
That my son, too,
My martyr son,
The sight of my eyes,
A part of my heart,
Bears the same scar

They led us half-way
On the road to freedom,
And shed profuse blood

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Of martyrs on footpaths,
Unmindful that liberty
Was far away
And homeland lay
In a dreadful
Whirlpool of blood,
And turned their back;
This pains me most
O my martyr son!

You left me behind
At the mercy of
Those who forgot me,
In turmoil
In a land
Where the same
Poverty prevails, and
Unemployment permeates
And the same
Scars pervade.

In a land
Where tyrants wield arms
Where Satan carries vipers
Where rulers conspire,

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Where barren land
Is watered with
Your blood

I was a mother,
Fertile, not barren,
Bearing off-spring,
Nor a kite, flying
Over new-born chicks
To pick them alive,
Nor a monsoon shower
To send down disaster,
So I caressed you,
And your hopes
And your ideals,
And am, therefore,
A mother
Of a million sons,
Who espouse your hopes
Your aspirations,
Your goals,
Who march forward
With the same warmth,
And zeal and zest,
And lead a caravan,

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Facing a storm

So I've come
To accost you
With the same
Million sons

AMIN KAMIL

(1) *THE DEW*

Into the garden quietly came the dew
Last night. It had sad news to tell.
Throughout the night it said
What every priest in mosque and
temple says,
Into the flower's ear whispering as it
wept:
"Mortal is the world,
Evanescent its laughter and its joys
With a cry we come, with a wail we go."
The morning came up,
Mind's mistiness cleared and eyes did see
around.
The dew; it shrank with fear,

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The dark night's messenger had fled.
The flowers laughed, the buds-
They clapped for joy and burst into bloom.

(2) *About Tomorrow*

I, too, look busy nowadays
And you as well feel much disturbed
For, in these indifferent times
Hate and love look much alike.

Wisdom and love feel perturbed
While chained together but born free.
Who'll open this cave's sesame?
And who'll smash this Panda's mount?

Shattered bridges lie all around
And all routes are mere smithereens;
So, let's squat on a mound of clay,
Let our clothes be besmeared with dust.

Everybody can't be a Shah Jehan,
Nor every dame a Mumtaz Mahal
While Adam's scions trekked on the road

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None was a god or a goddess.
But about tomorrow,

Do you know?
How many suns will shine?
Under our shades?

AZIZ DARVESH

No Hindu and No Muslim in that Dawn

Hear, O hear, the soul disturbing song
Of spirits singing as the tempest blows,
While waiting by the endless ocean's sands
A hapless throng
Of blinds and helpless in the undertows
Weep and wring their hands,
O, hear the song!
And in the storm I see the countless boats
The wind has set adrift, one sinks, one floats,
And I among them, tossed
On unknown depths, a stranger here and lost,
O, lead me on!
I made of mine own self a bridge and crossed
To that far shore beyond, and saw above,

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And in a brighter dawn,
No Hindu and no Musalman are there!
The secret, to his fellowmen, of love,
Division gone,
Aziz proclaims, and prays a common prayer.
From saints and sages, "All are one", he learned,
And so Aziz, the mad, the truth discerned.

GHULAM NABI FIRAQ

(1) *The flight*

All at once I flighted,
Into the vast blue skies
Zest and zeal my guide,
Endless space for me,
With full of thrill,
Nay, wonder and amazement,
Shinning pearls,
Galaxies, suns, moons, stars,
Queer shine,
I got traced,
Space endless and boundless,
The distance of eye sight
Before the light years

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Appeared no distance,
My whole time turned as if
A fragment of a minute,
Even a minute divided into
Various fractions,
Further and further.
Lo, when I alighted back
After endless voyage of limitless space,
I found myself lightened.
So did I find my big worries,
Dissipating into nothingness,
All our great problems did melt
Like snow flakes,
In the scorching sunlight of summer,
On this tennis ball
Which we have named earth
All the hangamas of people
Appeared trivial
They made me laugh
And laugh again.
Let the light of intelligence,
Knowledge and wisdom,
Every mind illumine,
Otherwise man is sure to fall into the
boundless abyss of

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Gloom, remorse and agony

(2) *To the Bulbul*

O bulbul, strange bird!
Your loud call was so very sudden
That my sad heart gave one sudden leap
For in a flash my world was quite transformed
Full of roses, bulbuls and spring verdure

I had been reading a Greek play
My mind absorbed, my fancy feeding
On a king's story, so true to
When new strife treads on the heels of the old

Though silver lay on the tree and around
When you struck your harp, blossoms came
And my winged fancy soared to heaven
Spring often bewitch one's eyes

The sun shone bright in an azure sky
A snow-white cloud sailed, not very far
We stood, enraptured, gazing at the lake
My love and I, in an island bower

Suddenly some one knocked at the door

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Fled was the dream and I was awake
A cold gust rushed in like a raider
And back I was where I had been

I have fastened doors and windows
Icicles on all sides sparkle like glass;
A blank cloud blanket wraps up the sky;
A chill wind pierces the marrow of my bones

The last chinar leaf on the branch
Hangs withered and lifeless like a corpse
Drunk with power, midwinter has his day,
Even then firepot we cling to is cold

You are a strange bird O bulbul!
How can I forget that in a dreary mid winter
You made me roam in flowering meadows.

RAHMAN RAHI

(1) *Confession*

I did not believe
That man survives through death after death
But not all the doubts are settled
And I believe.

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Can you recall the
time
When, in the scorching sun,
In the middle of the blackened road,
Your verse-burning, aflame-was written
With crimson, warm, vibrating dove-blood?

I sang that verse with the boom of a gun
That verse-ablaze, aflame,
Which the faithless dissemblers,
Desecrate, dismissing it as song.

I sang that verse but
Could find no trace of you
Nor, in the end, that of the Negro crowd
I only saw confabulating groups of men in
lanes and Bye-lanes

Adoring the ruby-tipped tongue of your sandalwood pen, the youthful, vigorous upper-arm mussels writhed and twisted, and the long eyelashes knit the dream with exquisite needle work But-there was no trace of you.

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When that long, black night raised not even a whimper,
I thought (beg your pardon!) you have gained your horizon
And opened the gates of the untouched land
Wherein flow the streams of milk
And multi-coloured birds flit across from twig to twig,
Pecking food, chirping, singing
Unperturbed

I did not believe
But now when my own eyes witness it,
In hand the very same pen,
On lips the very same lot cry,
In eyes the very same colourful horizon;
The ghost of doubt exorcised
And light emanates from the heart.
No,
That was not you!
Though the verse was yours,
It was written by an unknown, nameless Negro
Whose dove
The olive-painted jeeps and trucks
Trampled so hard as not to leave

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Anything for the dog to smell at
Walk, without the rumblings of heart, walk on;
It is the very same road,
The dark, blackened road
Only the Negros may be different,
Then read, read in the name of your horizon,
The nourisher of the vibrant upper-arm muscles
And the exquisitely embroidered dreams
Read
You are a Prophet,
And prophets do not die.

(2) *Illusion*

It was misty outside,
There was a silence,
And cold;
Not a shred on the trees and
Running walls asking for alms;
I had caught sight of grey ashes on the kitchen hearth,
And stood by the window, without the firepot

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Down below on the road whenever a shadow passed,
I felt like shouting:

'where are you (woman)? Would that you could take
me along?'
In return there was the mist
And silence
And cold.
Once again I crouched in the kitchen corner.

'Drukh!''Drukh'!
The water tape could not contain itself.
The heart was ignited.
Masses of smoke lifted the ashes aloft.
A red-blue flame jigged out
And the rain is pattering on your roof;
Streams will flow from your courtyard,
And ramble their way through the whole quarter,
And through its innumerable holes the earth
Will suck in
All these tears!'

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

(3) *Inklings from the Dark*

Yester night, my sleep driven off and the thread
of my fancies slit,
I identified an eagle in the wild shadow of my
mind:
On its beak did smoulder, in the same old
fashion, the blood of the dove.

Whose feathers were shed by hilltops into the
atmosphere?
Turning my head on the pillow, I sighted a
deep, dark chasm
And rose and leaned my back against the wall,
with the cool of the winter in the marrow of
my breast.

My lips got dry as whisperings reached me
from outside the window.
The snowflakes were sailing into the shelter of
the crevices.
Not a mouse did creep from under the box to
the store-cabinet.
In place of my upper garment a cat hung by the
hanger.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Rubbing my eyes, I tried to pull the quilt up to
my cold back,
But O, *kangri* shook and the cold, ultimately
ashes touched my feet.
While the owl hooted outside, 'O woe to you,
O woe!'
Fain would I have raised a cry of lament had
my heart stood by me.
Suddenly I called to my mind my darling
son.....
How rapidly did he listen to my bed-time tale
last night
When I told him of the agony of the Oyster in
her travails!
But he heard only a part of the tale when sleep
overtook him.
I rose, like a moonstruck man, and switched on
the light
And found him lying by the walk like
mushroom on the mount.
In deep slumber, with fragrant blossoms
blooming on his lips,
And a drop of sweat, dawned afresh, playing on
his brow.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Perchance he was dreaming the remaining part
of the tale!
Perchance the Oyester had laboured forth!

GHULAM NABI ARIZ

Workman

O workman mine
Hear my tale of woe
And I'll disclose
Words of wisdom
To shake you
From age-old stupor

Your hard-earned coins
Help shine
Homes and hearths
And rich palaces
Of opulent elite,
Which you can't see,
Even from a distance
Sans paying a price

You suffered a hot day
With an empty stomach;
Whatever can I offer

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

To quench your thirst
To satiate your hunger
At noon and dusk.

You left at dawn,
Worked and toiled
And smote builders
All day long,
And returned home
At dusk, like
A warrior brave.

You left at midnight
To earn a meal,
And picked up work,
And toil of a day,
A long, long day,
Without tea
Or breakfast.

You toiled in storm
In rains and lightening,
In roaring thunder,
Unmindful of the tempest,
You laboured on,

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Undaunted.

In coloured rose bed
Flowers have dyed
Their attire
In your blood;
And poor birds
Have been made
To suffer.

Ariz reveals
His heart's secrets
To a lonely lover,
For you may recall
His word some day
O workman mine.

GHULAM NABI KHAYAL

(1) *New Testament*

The rosy-fingered dawn has unveiled the
statute of light,
At sunset, the darkness had incarcerated life;
Each day fled away like swift wind.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

When earthen wall of life had already collapsed.
The-conceited preys are trapped in no time.

When a sweet moment leads astray the human soul,
He believes a clay pot is the Cup of Jamshed,
And the far-sighted one thinks of a star as the sun

When a bitter moment of time prolongs,
The spring-breeze emits smoke,
And the human soul is suffocated.

Many of us lost eyesight while gazing at time,
The cruel time, turning vices into virtues;
Time, which throws malice on pure ones;
Time, which makes things costlier than human lives.

Here, in broad daylight, a widow loses her only son,
But dawn always tears open curtains of darkness,
Birds always uphold the splendor of spring.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

I pray, that the world in slumber wakes up again,
A new resolution; glittering everything to shine in glow

O Lord! We crave with hope for such life,
That a cold shower sooths even the burning skies,
A garden laden with fruits, merchant of blessings.

The satisfaction, thirst of ages is quenched;
The nobility that preserves the universe.
I pray for a soul with the raised hands of Moses,
The Luminary, that gives away baskets of glow.

Light, light, here and there, everywhere,
Light, more light;
Lord! Give us only one moment of that life,
Bathed in light.

(2) *THE PRAYER*

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

It's the same pain, the same affliction,
Time and again, our wounds were cut open.
So many incisions, so many times.
Don't we have any escape from anguish?

Time has changed its colours before our eyes.
We looked at it steadily and earnestly,
And lost our own eyesight.

The night, a night in a jungle,
Besieged in frightful mountains.
Don't we have to see the light?

This dry and dark deep well,
Where we reached today,
Shall turn deeper and blacker tomorrow
This room where we sang songs of the sun,
It is now covered with thick blanket of darkness.
This imprisoned night
How can we see the blonde hair of the beloved?
How can we find her even in her shadow?

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Come, ye, my friends, illuminate the whole of it.
If you don't have lamps,
Why not to kindle your hearts?

Yesterday, when I accompanied you in broad daylight,
I came to a closed room into openness,
Where I had spent every moment like a chained sick man.
I don't know where you led me to,
I recall that soles of my feet fell on embers,
The birds had their thirsty beaks parched,
The air carried a stink of gun powder.

I Recall,
Where there was a dried up tree in wilderness,
Someone amongst us recited from Eliot:
"Here is no water but only rock,
Rock and no water and only rock,
The road widening above among the mountains,
Which are mountains of rock without water?

If there were water we stop and drink,

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Amongst the rock one cannot stop or think,
If there were only water amongst the rock"
I remember this much and nothing else.

My room is again guarded by the same
darkness,
I must go to sleep now.
I was reading the Old Testament,
To get my restive soul consoled.
To get my killing pain subsided.
May be only for a few moments,
To get my thirsty heart quenched.

I was absorbed in reading the Bible:
"And when the sun was going down,
A deep sleep fell upon Abraham;
And, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon
him.
And he said unto Abraham,
Know of surety that thy seed shall be a stranger
In a land that's is not theirs,
And shall serve them,
And they shell afflict them for four hundred
years"

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

My sleep is gone,
The night is burning.
I would cry loud and loud.
A wild cry bringing out the blood of my heart
Through my eyes.
Then I would pray in supplication to the Lord:
O' Lord, forgive me for my sins,
I am overpowered by destination even on the right path,
Dreams of sweet water are diluted in a mirage,
O' Lord forgive this bondsman,
Forgive me, my Lord.

(3) *The Inspiration*

The Goddess appeared in my dream and whispered into my ear:
"Your being is glorified, at last;
Open your eyes wake up and abandon your sleep."

In the morn, I opened my door;
and looked at the courtyard.
I found that the whole world had shrunk before my eyes."

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Again, I went into deep slumber,
with my body buried beneath the earth.
Goddess came to me and said:
Your doings have a dark start and a blurred end."

Godly men say, this is what is called destiny
O Lord! My boundaries are spreading over far and wide.

(4) *RESHMAAN*

Go, to the top of that hillock,

In a nomads' hamlet, Reshmaan is in wait for you,

Flames of lust have filled to the brim her cup of patience.

Why are you shivering?

Don't be afraid of some shepherd;

The intoxicated youth smashes all barriers.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

A blow of axe, one long shriek and a youth
with head held high falling down.

Self-growing trees of woods are bathed in
blood.

Go, and quench the thirst of a burning desert,

If the fire is not extinguished, it spreads far and
wide,

Therefore, the city of Troy was ruined.

Hey, you soldiers of Agamemnon!

Don't think about his fate,

Don't bother if Aegisthus is hatching plot
against him,

Don't be afraid of Iphigenia's loud cry,

You're there to fight. Keep on fighting.

Sharpen your swords and arrows'

But remember, when you're in the battle field,

One Helen may return home, many others of
the like,

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Shall become lustful.

O Lord! Save us from a sudden lightening!'

Which turns nomads' hamlets into heaps of ashes?

And drowns huge and gigantic ships

ARJUN DEV MAJBOOR

If I were a bird!

A little bird comes, gyres around,
And warbles sweet,
Softens the heat of summer.
All the night its strange warble,
Brings enlivening showers
To my shriveled being.

A melodious warble,
And strange surroundings,
Smothering fire, and death's rule.
How long shall this frightened life
Forebear! Like a befuddled prisoner,
Dumb to all tales of woe.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Oh, were I too a bird!
Forgetting all cares, I would fly
Away from this world of misery
After having soared
To my full in the sky, I would
Have a little rest
At the summit of high mountains.
And then, in one flight, I would reach
That beautiful valley of saints.
Where I would drink from a fount.

Escaping the frenzy of the streets,
I would fly away
To my deserted shanty,
And get relief, be it for a moment.

Walking and walking,
Walking for the whole life,
Holding cherished dreams dear,
No place to have a lasting rest.
A repose for a few instants is
Noting more than hope of a summer drizzle,
To a hot stone,
A hope that never gets fulfilled.

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Who stole away your waters?
O my cypress tree,
Do not cry, and remain aloft.
I see my window ajar,
A nestled swallow is watching it.
Nettles are bedspread all my garden,
Every stalk of my compound turf wails.

Behind the gate, two waiting eyes.
The air has forgotten children's hubbub.
All the birds dumfounded.
The tête-à-tête inside the pantry,
"What shall we cook for tonight?"
That delightful hee-haw
Of innocent kids, knew no religion.
The lays of nymphs, and cooing of doves,
The music of gushing brooks…
Time's topsy-turvy
Has changed the meaning of all.
Oh, could a saint, a rishi,
Come forth again!
These scalds of the Himalayas would get healed.

O kind bird!

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

I wish you and your warble a long life.
Make your warble louder,
I am incarcerated here,
Having a long tale of woes to narrate.
Now do me favour,
Take away these sighs and laments of mine,
Disseminate them
All around from the sky.

GHULAM RASOOL SANTOSH

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KASHMIR MOODS, COLOURS AND SEASONS

1)Crowned with sacred snowfulness
Of the multifaceted mount Haramukh
Descends the celestial bride,
Lifting the lid on musked youth
And blowing the moving breeze
On the overflowing, spilling beauty which
Treads softly on its floral feet
To the lake hallowed by love divine-
Blessed Beatitude
2) White radiance the day brings
Swans in the moon spread their wings,
Warm blush the sun diffuses

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Over the lake's transparency
The fair sun bares itself
Lighting the bosom of the lake,
Where the trusting lotus leaf
Innocently stretches heavenward.

3) Like blithe sparrows scampering
The white rays flirt with the waves,
As when dizzy milk-maids, dancing,
Spill whiteness to the music
Of the Wind and the lapping waves

4) Flashing bright, the sun impregnates
With hot kisses all over, root and top,
The massive, dense, leafy Chinar
Entreating the goddess, borrowing hues,
Casts myriad, circular patterns around and
Over the majestic, protects tree
Delighting the beholding goddess's eye like
That enchanted circle which saved
From the wicked gaze of Mayodan,
His cohorts, the Pandava's wife Drupadi
In her stripped but modest nudity.

5) High moon flashed in silver splendour,

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In a swoon lake shimmers-
Breathless bride in consummation
Rising wind stirs the water washing
Variegated boats atop the surf in a
Jig and Waltz the flower of September

6) Their desires pent up long, many a couple
Bend their steps to the lake fair, and
At long last the pining lovers meet-
Love's pledge redeemed-a lover's treat.

7) Every passing moment the sun
Changes the lake's crystal face
The mirrored surface breaks into
Rolling waves like silk lengths
Unfolding, until wind and light
Sunder, roll and scatter the show
In a riot of movement, sound and colour
Having shown, sung and whirled,
The scene dissolves, the tempo falls.

8) Cadaverous autumn etiolates summer.
Autumn flowers, pale all over,
Are bathed in saffron paleness
Banished from heaven, the rainbow

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Descends on earth, disguised as a
Profusion of motley flowers
Humming hunger the bees quench
On every flower, petal and leaf;
Saffron fields in ripeness full,
Nightly under a pallid moon
Recall immortal Habba Khatoon
The saffron queen, long since dead,
Her plaintive song still giving,
A point, like the upright saffron stem,
To love's quest everlasting.

9) Seeta, goddess of truth, Rama's spouse
Ablaze in an order of fire,
Flames licking the autumnal chinar
Hapless heaps of cinders,
Burnt hopes, the autumnal chinar
Scattered by cruel wind, the leafy
Waste wears the red glow of fire
Scarlet sky in crimson despair sees
The sun shyly dips beyond the edge.

10) Night slices shifting light
Breathing its laboured last,
Leveling the spent muslin folds,

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

In dreary darkness dispersed,
The vernal bride departs dying
Into the timeless ritual of rebirth
The wheel turns, then darkness swallows
Light-which, in turn, in good time, follows?

VASUDEV REH

THE NIGHT WATCHMAN

My cry every evening is 'Beware!'
And when I say 'Beware!,' I mean what I say.
It's my caution to you all, young and old,
When every evening, I cry out 'Beware!'

My vigils, O my friends, are not enough to see your through.
If you yield to careless slumber, no thief will hesitate,
But with the slightest chance will take whatever you have saved;
And there's no dearth of knaves, beware!

I only cry, 'O brothers, wake up and beware!'

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

In this uneven world, you've to struggle to your end.
If you'd secure your peace, surely now's not the time for rest!
Do not let go the skirt of courage, beware!

Do not take it lightly when you hear my call.
You shouldn't let others plan your present and your future.
Have no faith in robbers' oaths, their duty and their creed.
In short, think of what may happen, beware!

When you hear my cry, don't say, 'What's it to me?'
Don't treat it as an alien voice and say, 'What's it to me?'
When someone starts a fire, don't say, 'what's it to me?'
That's what I shout in town and village, beware!

The time is slightly out of joint; how can one set it right?

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Though this can't remain for ever, it's a phase
one cannot change.
Brigandage will slowly cease, but God knows
what'll be left.
Beware, O brother, these times, beware!

O friends, save the toy houses you as children
built in play.
Hold fast to the present time; to let it slip is
folly.
Don't rest when the pipe calls the snake; it is
not a foreign sound.
See that the flame doesn't burn the bride's
dreams, beware!

MOTI LAL SAQI

DAY BREAK

As the tired night sank behind the mountain,
Young dawn put radiance on its face;
The morning breeze played soft tunes on forest
trees;
Boulders bathed in Kaunsar waters;
Like mothers singing lullabies

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To Tender infants in their arms

The night beheld its death draw near;
The stars in a row packed up their goods
As light chased darkness from the sky,
A flame appeared on the eastern hill;
The morning star bent low his head
And departed, like some one in grief.

As I looked at the lakes of pearls,
My heart bloomed, hope radiating light.
Seeing the morning's splendour, I felt
That *Zuval Maal* had come by stealth
To keep her tryst with Rasool Mir.
The east was the prophet of the coming light,
And gentle nature seemed to say
That life would be like the flowering dawn

PITAMBARNATH DHAR FANI

Poet

Restless like a lightening,
Burning like a candle,
Tempestuous like a volcano,
Trepid like an earth quake,

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Is the Poet.

Burning mountains and skies,
Consuming forests and orchards,
Blazing powder-dumps,
Rocking palatial mansions,
Is a Poet.

Whose roar shakes
Crowns and thrones,
Whose might causes
Firmament tremble,
Whose gaze
Makes eyes shiver,
Whose demise is
Feared by death
Such a lion hearted soul
Is a Poet.

Who vouchsafes youth
To the senile
And floods dried up brooks,
And instills zest in waves,
Its rivulets, streams and lakes,
Such a moving spirit,

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Is a Poet.

Who lends a tongue to the mute,
And expression to the dumb,
And doles out cadence
To songsters?
And adds charm to the tales;
Such a spokesman,
Is a Poet.

Who sets fire to his abode
To illuminate another's home?
Who pulls down his own roof,
To build another's thatch
Such a homeless wretch
Is a Poet.

Who feels the pain of mankind
And sheds tears like rain
Whose nest is snatched?
By the thorns of flowers
Whose joy is lost
In autumn's gloom
So kind hearted
Is a Poet.

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Who knows the world at large
And believes in a lasting life
And remembers the writ of fate
And counts the virtues of strife
Such wise man
Is a Poet.

MUZAFFAR AZIM

A Goblet

A bright moon above,
And a goblet in hand,
And my love
Before my eyes;
These are my wishes
And hopes, which beg
For satiation.
If you have heart,
Ask of the winds,
What pain keeps
Hopes and wishes
In turn

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Each morn and eve
In flower gardens
A twinkling star
Plays hide and seek
On a wide sky
And makes scintillate
My drops of tears
And the gems
Of my love.

Dreams of tomorrow
Will come true
If pains and pangs
And sufferings of today
Are borne boldly
Only it appears
A blind story
In matters of love.

The road to life
Is long and tardy;
I lose its sight
In each milestone.

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The lake of life
Is a wide expanse;
I earned a headache
All my life
In search of
Its fathomless depth.

Since my senses
Opened my lips
My fond hopes
Have found expression;
So I wish to
Convey a word or two,
If I am blessed
With a goblet.

Maddening love shows
Hues numerous,
And Azim changes
Varied attires,
And flutters like
A faithless song-bird,
Or burns as a moth

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Of the candle of Faith.

Chaman Lal Chaman

Into Eyes

Look into my eyes,
For eyes, I don't follow
Look into my eyes
As if in a dream.

I wish you could play
And break talisman
For you are volatile.

It is rewarding
To gather pieces
Of a splintered soul
And help a tired man.

Bless me some day
And converse awhile
Sand pomp and show
Or a haughty stance.

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Why this wrath?
Over a moth's fault
While eyes are dry
And shorn of tears?

I want a day
To tear my robes
Before it is late
For madness to last.

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CHAPTER TEN
The present status of progressive writing

The progressive literary movement in Kashmir proved a turning point in the history of Kashmiri literature. It was like a strong edifice erected on a foundation that Kashmiri poetry and fiction reached the zenith of a very high standard among the regional languages of the country.

Some of the reactionaries, who had always been looking out for some concessions and favours from the corridors of power, branded it a politically orchestrated projection of Communism among the Muslims of Kashmir. Had they cool mindedly gone for an honest analysis of our whole literary wealth and its evolution right form 14th century, they would have found it clearly that without progressive literary movement our world of literature would

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have been like an unattended orphan left on the roadside to have some attention of the passers by.

The movement would remain alive and active had not the enemies within acted to divide it into fragments which also proved, contrarily, a bubble in a pond for them evaporating within no time.

The progressive movement has been the strongest one and the most inspiring than ever before for the contemporary literary world of Kashmir.

One has yet to find out with applying an impartial mind whether there could have been any outstanding writer of the language who was not in one way or the other associated with this historical movement.

After 1960 or so, when the movement was on the threshold of disintegration, a new cult of pseudo-poets and insipid writers came into being, most of them claiming to be *Sufi* poets without having any knowledge of the basics of what mysticism really is all about?

The Kashmiri poetry taking birth in 14th century and flowing like a thunderous stream is of course dominated by the *Sufi* poetry composed

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by those poets who had the knowledge of being one with God and who could find the existence of Lord within their own self . So, it was out of fancy towards mystic Kashmiri poetry that one and all followed this path without having any care for the requirements of the principles of grammar, meter, rhythm and rhyme which make essential segments for a good poetry.

These so called mystic poets are completely ignorant of how to compose a *ghazal* or a rhythmic poem. Therefore, they wrote their so called mystic poetry in a popular local meter *Watchun* , which does not stick to any particular meter.

When their poetry comes under sharp criticism by the researchers and critics they come out with a strange explanation that it is God himself who inspires them to write this poetry, though it is devoid of any meaning and undoubtedly a bundle of obscure and ambiguous writings.

Again, we turn to genuine poets who are continuing with their tryst with the times which have drastically changed since 1990, when the armed insurgency got off to its bloody start in Kashmir. This time, it is the poetry of resistance

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against violators of human rights, killers from the ranks of militants and the military, unresolved brutal killings of men, women and children by unidentified gunmen.

During this darkest period of Kashmir today, as many as 100,000 people have already been killed in acts of violence, terrorism, excessive use of force by men in uniforms with the murder of about 45 per cent of the victims going without any investigation till date.

The blood bath in Kashmir goes on unabated. The most heinous crimes committed against humanity from 1990 onwards have provoked poets, writers, novelists and playwrights to react to such frightful happenings with their pen and a deep feeling of such a state of humiliation, suppression and uncertainty. This kind of prevailing circumstances have given this language some of the finest pieces of world class literature.

The migration of tens of thousands of Kashmiri *Pandits* from the Valley in the wake of militancy, a new dimension has been added to the Kashmiri poetry. This is the agonising pain of separation suffered by a migrant, a refugee in his own

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country, from his place of birth where he is forced to live in hotter plains outside the Paradise of Kashmir with poisonous creatures like snakes, scorpions, and above all, in an unbearable inclement whether particularly during the burning summer. Some of their poems are really heart rending and make one feel how a sensible person might be feeling far way from his sweet home land.

I will cite here only one couplet by Moti Lal Saqi, a noted poet and researcher, who wanted to die in Kashmir and to be cremated under the shade of a magnificent Chinar tree in Mahanur village, his birth place in north of Srinagar. He wished:

Soore moth sapdith ti vethi manz baavizem
Be watan marniky dinam yini tana lukh

(When I pass way, immerse my ashes in River Jehlum
Lest, the people will say that Saqi died, in exile, far away from his home)

Coming true of this last wish of this gentle poet was not in his destiny and he breathed his last an was cremated far away from Kashmir, say in exile.

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This is the tragic part of the sad story of Kashmir that we lost for ever some good writers in migration including elderly scholar Prof P N Pushp, Som Nath Zutshi, Pushkar Bhan, Bansi Nirdosh, Umesh Kaul, Hari Kishen Kaul, Makhan Lal Bekas, Arjun Dev Majboor, Vasudev Reh, Roghunath Kastoor and others besides Abdul Sattar Ranjoor, Ali Mohammad Shahbaz, Sarvanand Premi and Ghulam Rasool Gayoor falling to the bullets of unknown assassins right in the Valley.

The most healthy aspect of Kashmiri intelligentia is very much there that the reasonable and well meaning Kashmiri migrants never blamed their Muslim brethren for their plight. On the contrary they craved to meet their lovable Muslim neighbours with whom they always shared their joys and sorrows in their homeland. This is the crux of Kashmiri society, an unparallel picture of liberalism and communal harmony seldom found in India and Pakistan.

If we go through the poetics of all the progressive writers to delve deep into their mindset, we will comfortably find that none of

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them has ever thought of inciting an iota of hatred or misunderstanding between communities which otherwise also has never raised its hood in this Paradise of Earth for centuries and continues to be there with all its zest and natural feelings inherited by the Kashmiris.

After the disintegration of Cultural Conference, many political developments took place in India and in Kashmir.

During early sixties of twentieth century, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had been receiving numerous complaints, even from his close aides, that some of the chief ministers of the Indian provinces were indulging in rampant corrupt practices bringing disrepute to whole of India and also the name of a political stalwart like Nehru. Nehru on his own conducted a secret investigation in this matter and found that topping the list of most dishonest and corrupt heads of the state governments were, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad of Kashmir, Pratap Singh Kairon of Punjab, Biju Patnaik of Orissa, Dr Bidhan Chandra Roy of West Bengal, S K Patil of Bombay and Kamraj Nadar of Madras. He

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evolved a diplomatic way of handling the sensitive issue by way of requesting them to tender their resignations voluntarily so that a weakened Congress party is strengthened and a new spirit is infused in its tired rank and file. They had no way to go but to abide by the prime minister's decision and all of them were made primary members of the ruling Congress party.

Bakhshi knew that the rug had been pulled from under his feet. He had no option open to him but to be quiet and accept the verdict which proved last nail in the coffin of his unquestionable power.

The battle of 1947 between these two neighbours and the war of 1965 had its root cause related to Kashmir. In 1965, Pakistan managed thousands of armed infiltrators crossing over into the Indian side of the border but the local people did not cooperate with them and lost no time in informing the authorities about this infiltration. The first informer in 1965 was a Gujjar, Mohammad Did, who spotted infiltrators crossing over the cease fire line from Gulmarg hills in the west of Kashmir. Many infiltrators were caught, blind folded and thrown behind the

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bars. A full scale war broke out between India and Pakistan. Mohammad Din was conferred *Padma Shree* award for this act of patriotism, but was later gunned down by militants when yet another bloody militancy got off to its start in 1990.

Sadiq, the then chief minister, founder and chief patron of the Kashmiri progressive literary movement, passed away in a Chandigarh hospital due to his kidney failure on 12 December 1971.

All these adverse happenings and the demise of Sadiq proved a fatal blow to a fading out progressive literary movement in Kashmir. After Sadiq, there was no influential or a committed comrade who could take the caravan ahead. That was the end of an epoch making literary movement which could not produce its substitute till date in one way or the other.

Also, the conspirators within and bourgeois elements outside saw to it that this imposing movement meets its end. And it happened with no one ever trying to revive it.

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GLOSSARY

Armughaan Gift

Hijaz The holiest Islamic city of Medina in Saudi Arabia

Iblees Mephistopheles

Shoora Advisory Council

Majlis Council

Magna Carta An English legal document written in 1215 AD which had a huge influence on developing legal system of England

Nanak Shahi The currency floated by Sikh rulers of Kashmir in the name of Guru Nanak

Khooni Bloody

Darwaazah Gate

Zunnaar the sacred thread of Hindus

Qashqa A vermillion mark made by Hindus on their forehead

Tasawwuf Mysticism

Pandit Hindu Brahmin

Musalmaan Muslim

Shikara A small boat used for a joy ride on the waters of Dal Lake in Srinagar

Patwari A Revenue official

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Yaavun Youth
Nahej Path
Maraz Southern and south eastern parts of Kashmir Valley
Kamraz Northern zone of Kashmir
Marazi People belonging to South of Kashmir
Kamrazi Inhabitants of north Kashmir
Burzahaama An ancient archival site in north Srinagar where finds of Neolithic age were excavated
Nawwab Vicegerent
Pragaash Dawn
Zabaan Language
Shaayiri Poetry
Khanqah A Muslim shrine
Mualla Sanctified
Shaayir-e-Kashmir Poet of Kashmir
Mitrigam Birth place of Poet Mahjoor in South Kashmir
Athwajan A small roadside town on the eastern outskirts of Srinagar where Poet Mahjoor's mausoleum has been built
Banihal A high mountain about 7,000 feet above sea level in the mountain range

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of Pir Panchal and the entry point into Kashmir Valley

Khoja	Rich man
Dussa	Pashmina shawl
Bazm	Assembly
Adab	Literature
Jawabi card	Post-paid reply card
Vaakhs	Vaakyani in Sanskrit
Leela	Hymns sung by Hindus before their deities
Moaj Kasheer	Mother Kashmir
Gul	Flower
Bulbul	Nightingale
Mushaira	A poetic symposium
Soanth	spring
Graav	Complaint
Shihily Kul	Shady tree
Baisakhi	Essentially a Sikh festival which falls in April each year
Rafgar	Artisan of needle work
Reh	Flame
Ta	And
Raqs	Dance
Pai	Light
Chu	is
Zulmaat	Darkness
Vuzaan	Oozing out

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Path Afterwards
Maut Death
Waery Turn
Ghazal Most popular poetic specie particularly in Persian, Urdu and Kashmiri languages
Rubayi Quatrain
Kong Posh Saffron Flower
Qurbaani Sacrifice
Shopian Famous apple growing town in south Kashmir
Alaav Bonfire
Drama Play
Baal Hillock
Apaari Across
Gaash Light
Yeli When
Phol Broke (dawn)
Kantoap Kashmiri woolen cap used in winter
Thana Police station
Hawalaat Police lock up
Thanedar Police official
Meraju-n-Nabi One of the holiest religious days of Islamic calendar when Prophet Mohammad was escorted to ascend the heavens during that night

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Hazratbal The most sanctified Muslim shrine on the western shores of Dal Lake in Srinagar where the holy relic (a strand of Prophet's hair) is preserved

Sher Lion

Vakeel Defense counsel

Daleel Argument

Ghubaar Vexation

Khaatir Mind

Dal The largest lake of fresh water in Srinagar

Zanjoor Chain

Saaz Music

Sahitya Akademi The most Active National Academy of Letters of India developing all the regional languages of the country for the last more than half-a- century

Shama Candle

Sharika Devi The holy temple of a Kashmiri Hindu goddess situated on the hillock of Hari Parbat in Srinagar

Eid A Muslim festival of religious righteousness and festivities

Daal Pulses

Aana 16th part of old rupee not in currency now

Kashmir Treasures Collection. Digitization by eGangotri

Chillum Part of smoking pipe containing tobacco and fire

Kulliyaat Collected works

Sufi Mystic

Ilhaam Inspiration

Tota Parrot

Zikr Recitation

Mansoor Al-Hallaj A Persian Muslim mystic, (857-922), who was martyred by his fanatic opponents for being held guilty of heresy. Maulana Rumi in his poem on Mansoor titled ***The Sunrise Ruby*** said:

In the early morning hour,
just before dawn, lover and beloved wake and take a drink of water
She asks, "Do you love me or yourself more?
Really, tell the absolute truth."
He says, "There's nothing left of me.
I'm like a ruby held up to the sunrise.
Is it still a stone, or a world
made of redness? It has no resistance to sunlight."
This is how Hallaj said, I am God, and told the truth!
The ruby and the sunrise are one.
Be courageous and discipline yourself.

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Completely become hearing and ear,
and wear this sun-ruby as an ear-ring.
Work, Keep digging your well.
Don't think about getting off from work.
Water is there somewhere.
Submit to a daily practice.
Your loyalty to that is a ring on the door.
Keep knocking, and the joy inside
Will eventually open a window
and look out to see who's there.

Raja Inder	A Hindu god
Darvesh	Mendicant
Shruk	Ashlok in Sanskrit
Watchun	Kashmiri Love lyric
Mathnavi	An epic narrating a legendary or mythological story
Asraar	Mysteries
Kasheer	Kashmir
Shiraaza	Combination
Gaash	Light
Sangarmaal	Mountain peaks
Pragaash	Morning glow
Watan	Motherland
Lakh	One hundred thousand rupees
Hamaari	Ours
Mousiqi	Music

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Karvaan Caravan
Naeb Clue
Pamposh Lotus
Devanagari Abandoned script used for Kashmiri language during the period of Hindu era
Darbaar A king's court
Aaina Mirror
Aatash Fire
Chinar The gigantic tree of Kashmir Valley
Nishat A sprawling garden laid by Mughals on the eastern shores of Dal lake
Iqbaliyaat Research and knowledge about Iqbal's life and works
Anarkali A bustling market in Lahore, Pakistan
Naye New
Zaaviye Angles
Maktaba Book shop
Bharatiya Indian
Parishad Organisation
Chambeli Jasmine
Mandva *A bower*
Taley Beneath
Payaam Message
Mashriq East

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Baal	Wings
Jibreel	The angel, Gabriel
Khudi	Ego
Naya	New
Jashn	Festival
Shikast	Breaking of
Zindaan	Prison
Rang	Colour
Budshah	The Great king
But Shikan	Iconoclast
Hamadani	hailing from Persian city of *Hamadan*
Darya	River
Shiraz	A famous city of poets in Iran
Do	Two
Fakhtaayein	Doves
Zindagi	Life
Maut	Death
Diwana	Mad man
Khwaab	Dream
Bombur	Wasp
Yembirzal	Narcissus
Vitasta	The ancient name of river Jehlum in Srinagar
Gaashiry Munaar	Luminaries

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Nabir Sheikh A Kashmiri Muslim name

Hemaal The legendary Kashmiri beloved of Nagaraja, king of serpents

Jaan Name of a Kashmiri female

Habib A local Kashmiri Muslim name

Pampury Belonging to saffron-growing Pampore town in the east of Srinagar

Shalamar The famous Mughal garden in Kashmir

Mumtaz Mahal Queen of Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, who built Taj Mahal in memory of the queen, on the banks of *Yamuna* River in Agra city of Uttar Pradesh province in north India

Hangama Tumult

Kangri Firepot used by Kashmiris during winter

Jamshed A legendry king of ancient Persia

Reshmaan The imaginary name of a voluptuous Kashmiri nomad damsel

{Aegisthus

{Agamemnon

{Iphigenia

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{Helen Main characters of Homer's ancient Greek epic, *Iliad,* narrating 10-year long Trojan War

Rishi Ascetic

Pandavas Five main characters of Hindu mythological epic, Ramayana

Drupadi Common wife of five *Pandava* brothers

Seeta Spouse of Hindu god, *Rama*

Rama Main character of Hindu epic, Ramayana

Kaunsar A mountain stream wherefrom *Parvati*, spouse of Lord Shiva, would sail in a pleasure boat from east to west of Kashmir to meet her consort, Shiva on the Harmokh mountain

Zuval Maal An ancient female Kashmir name used in some of local poetic compositions

Kaleem Speaker (Title of Moses)

Tajalli Splendour

Maseeh Healer (Title of Jesus Christ)

Saleeb Cross

Neest Not in existence

Paighambar Messenger

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Walekin	But
Dar	In
Baghal	Armpit
Daarad	Holds
Kitab	Book
Gaya	Went (he)
Daur	Era
Sarmaayadari	Capitalism
Tamasha	Show
Madari	Juggler
Mufakkir	Thinker
Aqwaam	Peoples
Mashriq	East
Tahreek	Movement
Azadi	Freedom
Gulshan	Flower garden
Gulfam	Rose faced

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· Mr Ghulam Nabi Khayal is a veteran poet, writer, research scholar and journalist based is Srinagar, Kashmir, India. He has been contributing has mite in the fields of literature and journalism for the last 55 years. He has already published about two dozen books in English, Urdu and Kashmiri languages.

· Mr Khayal has been given ten awards on international, national and local level which include the prestigious award given to him by the Sahitya Akademi in 1975.

· Besides being on various cultural committees, he is currently also a member of the Advisory Committee of Allama Iqbal Institute of the University of Kashmir and the Urdu advisory Board of the same University.

· Mr Ghulam Nabi Khayal has also functioned for many years as the visiting professor in the Department of Mass Communication in the Kashmir University.

· In a way he became the pioneer of Kashmiri journalism when he started first Kashmiri Weekly *Wattan* in 1965. This was followed by his Urdu paper *Iqbal* and presently, Mr Khayal is running his English weekly newspaper *Voice of Kashmir* published from Srinagar since 2003.

· As a renowned journalist, Mr Khayal has also been J&K correspondent for TIME magazine, India Today, New Delhi, Statesman, New Delhi, The Guardian, London, Voice of America, Illustrated Weekly of India, Mumbai etc.

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